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THE LIFE OF THE RT. HON. SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, BART., M.P.

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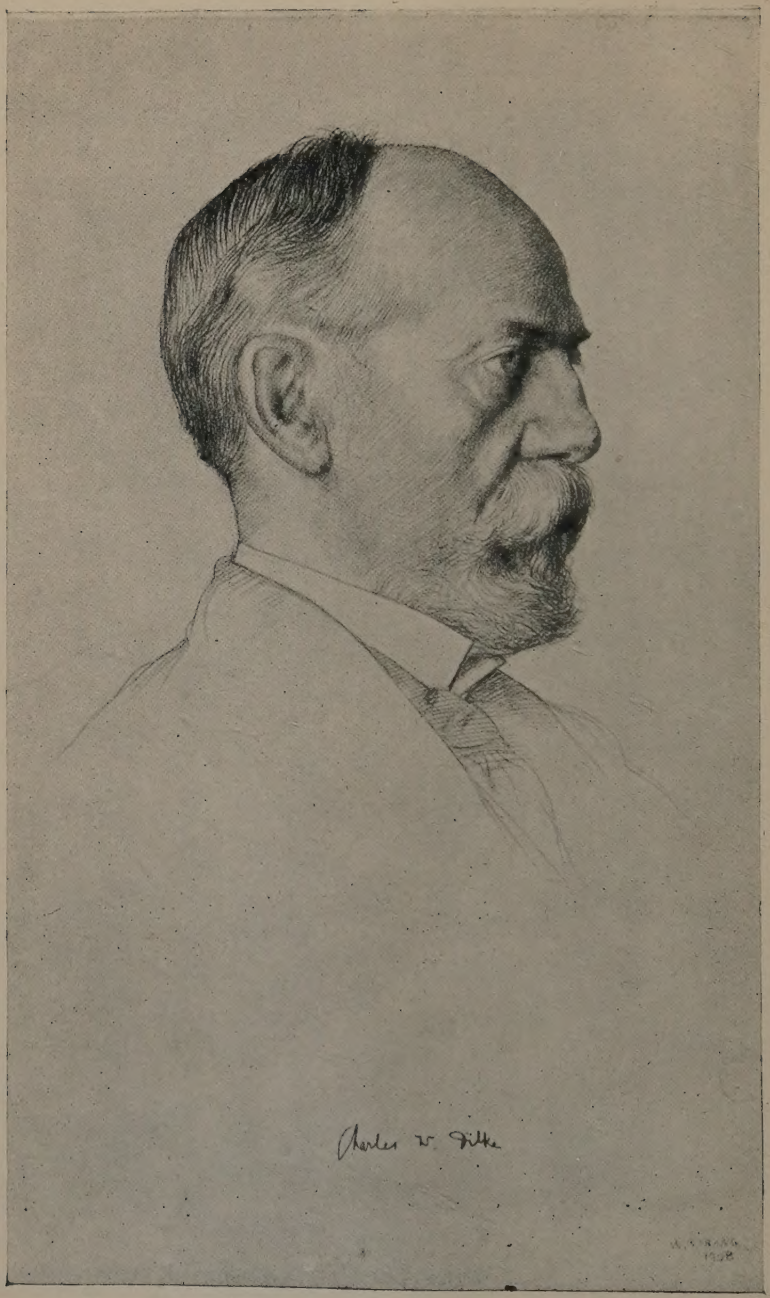

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE.

From a drawing by W. Strang in 1908.

THE LIFE OF THE RT. HON.
SIR CHARLES W. DILKE
BART., M.P.

BEGUN BY STEPHEN GWYNN, M.P.
COMPLETED AND EDITED BY
GERTRUDE M. TUCKWELL
LITERARV EXECUTRIX OF SIR CHARLES DILKE

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. II.

LONDON
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1917

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CONTENTS OF VOL. II

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXXIV.	HOME AFFAIRS (OCTOBER, 1883, TO DECEMBER, 1884)	1
XXXV.	EGYPT (1884)	28
XXXVI.	FRANCHISE AND REDISTRIBUTION (JULY TO DECEMBER, 1884)	63
XXXVII.	FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN 1884	80
XXXVIII.	DIVIDED COUNSELS (JANUARY AND FEBRUARY, 1885)	93
XXXIX.	THE FALL OF KHARTOUM AND THE PENJDEH INCIDENT	108
XL.	REDISTRIBUTION: COERCION AND DEVOLUTION (1885)	124
XLI.	FALL OF ADMINISTRATION (JUNE TO JULY, 1885)	145
XLII.	OUT OF OFFICE (JULY, 1885)	154
XLIII.	THE TURNING-POINT (JULY, 1885, TO JULY, 1886)	162
XLIV.	THE RADICAL PROGRAMME *versus* HOME RULE (JULY TO DECEMBER, 1885)	181
XLV.	BEGINNING OF THE HOME RULE SPLIT (DECEMBER, 1885, TO FEBRUARY, 1886)	195
XLVI.	THE FIRST HOME RULE BILL (FEBRUARY TO JULY, 1886)	209
XLVII.	LADY DILKE—76, SLOANE STREET	226
XLVIII.	FOREIGN POLICY	244

CHAPTER		PAGE
XLIX.	PUBLIC LIFE AND RETURN TO PARLIAMENT (1886-1894)	264
L.	INDIA AND FRANCE—RHODES AND BISMARCK (1886-1892)	292
LI.	PERSONAL LIFE—IN OPPOSITION (1895-1904)	310
LII.	LABOUR (1870-1911)	342
LIII.	WORK FOR NATIVE RACES (1870-1911)	368
LIV.	THE BRITISH ARMY	387
LV.	IMPERIAL DEFENCE	400
LVI.	ARMY AND NAVY IN PARLIAMENT	413
LVII.	DEATH OF LADY DILKE—PARLIAMENT OF 1905	458
LVIII.	FOREIGN AFFAIRS (1890-1910)	475
LIX.	THE LAST YEARS	517
LX.	LITERARY WORK AND INTERESTS	535
LXI.	TABLE TALK	547
	INDEX	571

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS TO VOL. II

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE IN THE YEAR 1908 - - *Frontispiece*
From a drawing by W. Strang.

TO FACE PAGE

MRS. MARK PATTISON - - - - - - 92
From a photograph taken about 1878.

SIR THOMAS WENTWORTH, 1ST BARON WENTWORTH (DIED MARCH 3RD, 1550-51) - - - - - - 230
From a painting ascribed to Theodore Bernardi.

BISMARCK - - - - - - - - - 304
From a photograph given by him to Sir Charles W. Dilke.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE ROWING - - - - - 318
From a photograph reproduced by permission of the *Daily Mirror*.

DOCKETT EDDY - - - - - - - 324
From photographs.

PYRFORD ROUGH - - - - - - - 326
From photographs.

LADY DILKE IN THE YEAR 1903 - - - - - 462
From a photograph by Thomson.

THE LIFE OF SIR CHARLES DILKE

CHAPTER XXXIV

HOME AFFAIRS

OCTOBER, 1883—DECEMBER, 1884

I.

THE interval between the Sessions of 1883 and 1884 was critical for the question of electoral reform which interested Liberals beyond all other questions, but involved the risk of bringing dissensions in the Cabinet to the point of open rupture. As the months went by, Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Hartington used less and less concealment of their differences, while it was well known to all the Cabinet that the alliance between Chamberlain and Dilke was complete and unconditional. Whoever broke with Chamberlain broke with Dilke. Fortunately a certain bond of personal sympathy, in spite of divergent views, existed between Lord Hartington and Sir Charles Dilke, and this bond largely helped to hold Mr. Gladstone's Government together.

In the negotiations which followed between the leaders of the two great Parties, Sir Charles Dilke was able to show the full measure of his value to the State. It was of first-rate importance that the Liberal Party should possess at that moment a representative with whom Lord Salisbury found it congenial to treat, and whom the most advanced Liberals trusted unreservedly to treat with Lord Salisbury.

The same confidence could hardly have been given by them to Lord Hartington, who held that "equalization of the franchise was pressing mainly on account of the pledges

that had been given, and not much for any other reason."* Most Liberals took a very different view of the need for this reform. Further, Lord Hartington held that franchise and redistribution should be treated simultaneously, and he was unwilling to extend the franchise in Ireland.

At a Cabinet on October 25th, 1883, the question of simultaneous or separate treatment of the problems had been settled. Mr. Gladstone, says Sir Charles, "made a speech which meant franchise first and the rest nowhere." On the Irish question, Sir Charles was instructed to get accurate statistics as to the effects of equalizing the franchise between boroughs and counties, and 'on Friday, November 16th,' he notes, 'I wrote to Chamberlain: "I have some awful figures for poor Hartington to swallow —700,000 county householders in the Irish counties."' Lord Hartington still stuck to his point of linking redistribution and franchise.

But on November 22nd,

'Mr. Gladstone read a long and admirable memorandum in favour of the views held by him, by Chamberlain, and by me, as to franchise and redistribution—that is, franchise first, with a promise of redistribution but no Bill; and Hartington received no support after this from any members of the Cabinet.'

There were, however, matters in which Lord Hartington's Conservative tendencies found an ally in the Prime Minister. On November 28th, 1883, at the Committee of the Cabinet on Local Government,

'Chamberlain noted: "Mr. Gladstone hesitates to disfranchise the freeholders in boroughs—persons voting as householders in boroughs and as freeholders in the counties in which the boroughs are constituted. I am in favour of one man one vote, and told him so." Our not getting one man one vote was entirely Mr. Gladstone's fault, for the Cabinet expected and would have taken it, Hartington alone opposing, as he opposed everything all through.'

* Letter to Mr. Gladstone of October 24th, 1883, quoted by Mr. Bernard Holland in his *Life of the Duke of Devonshire*, vol. i., p. 395.

The question of widening the franchise in Ireland was still unsettled, and Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Hartington both made allusion to it in public speeches at this moment. The speeches, apart from their marked difference in general tone, were on this point in flat contradiction to each other, and on December 2nd Lord Hartington wrote to Mr. Gladstone with a threat of resignation. On that day he delivered at Accrington a long eulogy of the Whigs, who had "formed a connecting link between the advanced party and those classes which, possessing property, powers, and influence, are naturally averse to change." The Whigs it was, he contended, who had by their guidance and their action reduced changes in the direction of popular reform to the "calm and peaceful process of constitutional acts."

'At this moment there was a conflict raging between Chamberlain and Hartington, and in their autumn speeches each of them pretty plainly attacked the other's policy. Chamberlain wrote to me: "Why does Hartington think *aloud* when he thinks one thing and is going to do the other? And why does he snub the Caucus when he has made up his mind to do exactly what they want? If he cannot learn to be a little more diplomatic, he will make a devil of a rum leader!" A little later Chamberlain gave me "passages from a speech which *ought* to be delivered: 'Yes, gentlemen, I entirely agree with Lord Hartington. It is the business and duty of Radicals to lead great popular movements, and if they are fortunate enough to kindle the fire of national enthusiasm and to stir the hearts of the people, then it will be the high prerogative of the great Whig noble who has been waiting round the corner to direct and guide and moderate the movement which he has done all in his power to prevent and discourage.' "

'The storm between Hartington and Chamberlain having broken out again, Chamberlain wrote to me on December 5th, enclosing a letter of reproof from Mr. Gladstone, and saying: "I replied casuistically that I would endeavour to exclude from my speeches the slightest reference to Hartington, but that he was really too trying. I reminded Mr. G. that I had asked if I were free to argue the question, and that he had said: Yes — no one taking exception." In the following week Chamberlain came to town and dined with me,

and we discussed the matter. Although Mr. Gladstone had blown Chamberlain up, he was really much more angry with Hartington.'

It appears from the *Life of the Duke of Devonshire* that Mr. Gladstone continued through December his attempts to mediate.* The matter is thus related by Sir Charles, though not from first-hand knowledge, since he went to Toulon in the middle of December, and stayed there till January 8th, 1884:

'During my absence I had missed one Cabinet, the first that I ever missed, and perhaps the only one. It was held suddenly on January 3rd, and I could not arrive in time. Mr. Gladstone had come up from Hawarden under the impression that Hartington was going to resign, because we would not produce a redistribution scheme along with franchise. On the morning of the 3rd, however, he received a letter in which Hartington gave way on the understanding that Mr. Gladstone would state the general heads of his redistribution scheme. The subject was not named at the Cabinet of the 3rd, which dealt with Egypt only. But the Cabinet adjourned to the 4th, and on January 4th discussed South Africa, and also . . . received a statement from Mr. Gladstone as to his intention to state the heads of our redistribution scheme in "very general terms." On the 10th I noted: "The Cabinets have resulted in peace between Lord Hartington and Mr. Gladstone, but the Reform Bill will be less complete than I had hoped." "Mr. Gladstone calmed Hartington by promising not to run away from us after franchise and before redistribution, which was what Hartington feared he meant to do." '

Discussion upon the detail of the Bill was resumed, and on January 23rd, 1884,

'the Chancellor (Lord Selborne), Hartington, Kimberley, and Dodson, supported by Mr. Gladstone, forced, against Harcourt, Chamberlain, and myself, a decision not to attach any condition of residence to the property vote.'

'On January 28th there was a meeting of the Committee of the Cabinet on the Franchise Bill in Mr. Gladstone's room. Chamberlain was anxious to "make Hartington go

* See *Life of the Duke of Devonshire*, by Mr. Bernard Holland, vol. i., p. 398 *et seq.*

out on franchise." I asked him how he thought it was to be done, and he replied: "If he is restive now, raise the question of Mr. Gladstone's statement on redistribution, and oppose all limitations in that statement"; and he added that Mr. Gladstone had only agreed to make the statement unwillingly to quiet Hartington, and that if Hartington were not quieted Mr. Gladstone would go back about it. Chamberlain and I on this occasion tried to make the Franchise Bill more Radical, but failed, Mr. Gladstone opposing us on old-fashioned grounds.'

'Chamberlain came to me' (on April 26th) 'about a plan which Mr. Gladstone was to broach at the next Cabinet, for putting off the operation of the Franchise Act until January 1st, '86, in order to give time for redistribution to be dealt with. We decided to oppose it, on the ground that it would not improbably lead to our being forced into holding an election on the old franchise.'

At the beginning of the Session Sir Charles helped on the general policy of Radicalism by one of his many minor electoral reforms. This was a Bill to extend over the United Kingdom the right of keeping the poll open till eight o'clock at night, which he had secured as a privilege for Londoners in 1878. He notes that on February 11th he 'fought with Tory obstructives as to hours of polling, and won'; but the violent resistance which was offered at first did not continue, and the Bill passed quietly in July, after time had been given to discuss it in the constituencies.

'On this day (July 22nd) I had a long and curious conversation with Healy as to Irish redistribution and as to the hours of poll in counties, with regard to which he was against extension, but said that he was forced to support it in public. He told me that his private opinion was that the Land Act had quieted Ireland.'

The "Representation of the People" Bill, as the franchise measure was called, was introduced on February 28th, 1884, and made steady progress, Liberals finding their task facilitated by the difficulties of their opponents.

'On May 7th I wrote to Chamberlain to say that I had to speak at a house dinner of the Devonshire Club that night, and to ask him if there was anything he wanted said.

To which he replied: "Note Randolph Churchill's letter to Salisbury with reference to the Conservative Caucus, and the vindication of the Birmingham one." It was impossible not to notice this important letter, which revolutionized politics for some time.'

'*May 14th.*—After the Cabinet I was informed by Chamberlain that a week earlier, on Wednesday, May 7th, Randolph Churchill had sent to him to know whether, if he broke with the Conservatives, the Birmingham Liberals would support him as an independent candidate.'

Sir Charles's letter to his agent at this time sums up the political position:

"The Tory game is to delay the franchise until they have upset us upon Egypt, before the Franchise Bill has reached the Lords. . . . Our side will be in a humour to treat as traitors any who do not insist that the one Bill and nothing else shall be had in view—in face of the tremendous struggle impending in the Lords."

'On *May 13th* I had received a letter from Mr. Gladstone in answer to one from me in a matter which afterwards became important, and but for Chamberlain's strong stand would have forced me to leave the Government. I had so strong an opinion in favour of woman's suffrage that I could not undertake to vote against it, even when proposed as an amendment to a great Government Bill.'

Sir Charles had written as follows:

"ANTIBES,
"*Easter Eve*, '84.

"I had thought till lately that the Woman's Suffrage division in Committee on the Franchise Bill would have been so hollow that my absence from it would not have mattered; but as I find that Grosvenor thinks that it will not be hollow, it becomes my duty to write to you about it. I myself think Grosvenor wrong; the woman's suffrage people claim some 250 'friends,' but this they do by counting all who, having voted with them once, have abstained from voting for many years, and who are really foes. The division can only be a close one if the Tory party as a body support the view which is Northcote's, I believe, and was Disraeli's, but many of the leaders would be bitterly opposed to such a course. Mr. Disraeli left the woman's suffrage amendment an open

question on his own Reform Bill, and forbade the Government Whips to tell against the amendment, but the mass of the Tory party voted in the majority. On this next occasion there will be a larger Liberal vote against the change than there was last year, and I do not believe that there will be a larger Tory vote in its favour. But, supposing that I am wrong and Grosvenor right, I should feel no difficulty in voting against the amendment on the grounds of tactics which would be stated, provided that Fawcett and Courtney, who are the only other thick-and-thin supporters of woman's suffrage in the Government, voted also, but I cannot vote if they abstain. Under these circumstances what had I better do ?"

Mr. Gladstone wrote back on May 11th:

"The question as to the votes of members of the Government on woman's suffrage is beyond me, and I have always intended to ask the Cabinet, and (like the Gordon rescue) at the proper time. The distinction appears to me as clear as possible between supporting a thing in its right place and forcing it into its wrong place. To nail on to the extension of the franchise, founded upon principles already known and in use, a vast social question, which is surely entitled to be considered as such, appears to me in principle very doubtful. When to this is added the admirable pretext —nay, the fair argument—it would give to the House of Lords for 'putting off' the Bill, I cannot see the ground for hesitation. But I quite understand what (I believe) is your view, that there should be one rule for all the members of the Government."

'This was an important letter. The words "(like the Gordon rescue) at the proper time" seem to show that Mr. Gladstone had already made up his mind to send an expedition to Khartoum, although he would not say so. The body of the letter proved that Mr. Gladstone had a very strong opinion against me on the main point, and the consultation of the Cabinet (which was dead against woman suffrage), and the one rule for all members of the Government, meant that he intended to force my vote by a Cabinet resolution, and, killing two birds with one stone, to attack at the same time Fawcett, who had walked out on several questions, and announced his intention of walking out on others.

'By May 22nd I had finally made up my mind that I could not vote against the woman franchise amendment—even as a mere matter of tactics and deference to others—if Courtney and Fawcett went out on the matter. I could not speak to them about it because of the "Cabinet secret" doctrine. Childers had been directed by the Cabinet to sound Courtney, because he was Courtney's official superior in the Treasury. Childers was to offer Courtney that if he would vote against the amendment he should be allowed to speak for woman franchise on the merits, and that none of its opponents in the Cabinet (that is, all except myself) should speak against it on the merits. I noted: "On the whole I think that we shall walk out, and not be turned out for so doing." I again explained my position to Mr. Gladstone. . . . I felt that the majority of those voting for woman franchise on this occasion would be Tories, voting for party reasons, and in order to upset the Bill. I was therefore unwilling to go out on this occasion, but thought I could not do otherwise than make common cause with Courtney. On the merits of woman franchise I had and have a strong opinion. I always thought the refusal of it contrary to the public interest. The refusal of the franchise also affects the whole position of women most unfavourably.'*

On May 24th Sir Charles told the Cabinet what 'I had told Mr. Gladstone in a letter which I had written to him on Easter Eve, and renewed on the occasion when he made the reply which has been quoted above.'

When the amendment was reached, Dilke, with Fawcett and Courtney, abstained. This led to serious trouble. Sir Charles wrote on June 12th in his Diary:

"Hartington is very angry with me for not voting, and wants me turned out for it. He has to vote every day for things which he strongly disapproves, and this makes the position difficult. He says that my position was wholly different from that of Fawcett and Courtney, because I was a party to the decision of the Cabinet, and that custom binds

* Mrs. Fawcett wrote thanking him 'in the name of the friends of Women's Suffrage. "Your being a member of the Cabinet made your position in the matter one of special difficulty; but I do assure you that our gratitude is real and unfeigned."'

the minority in the collective decision of Her Majesty's servants. This is undoubtedly the accepted theory. Poor Hibbert was made to vote.* I fear the Cabinet put the yoke, not of political necessity, but of their personal prejudice against woman suffrage, on the necks of their followers."

The matter came up at a Cabinet on June 14th, and was made worse because a letter from Lord Hartington, 'offensive in tone,' had been circulated by accident. However,

'Mr. Gladstone issued a minute about my walking out on woman's suffrage, which concluded by a proposal, if his colleagues concurred, to request me to remain in the Government. Thus ended a personal crisis which, to use the French phrase, had been "open" since my letter to Mr. Gladstone dated "Antibes, Easter Eve." '

'Chamberlain wrote to me: "It is settled"; and I wrote back: "It is settled. I would not have asked you to stand by me, as I have no constitutional case, and your conduct in so doing could not be defended. I always count on your friendship, but this would have been too much." He replied: "We are both right. You could not ask me, but if you had been requested to resign I should have gone too." Chamberlain had previously informed the Cabinet that, though he differed from me about woman's suffrage, and regretted the course that I had felt myself obliged to take, he intended to stand by me "to the fullest extent." '†

II.

While the great measure of the Session went steadily through its stages, various other questions were also occupying the Cabinet. The search for a new Speaker in succession to Sir Henry Brand, who had declared at the beginning of 1883 his unwillingness to retain office beyond that Session, was one, and not the least important, of these questions. Sir Henry James was first mentioned, and he refused.

* For Sir John Tomlinson Hibbert see footnote, Vol. I., p. 508.

† The further negotiations with regard to Franchise and Redistribution in 1884, and the "compact" which ended them, are dealt with in Chapter XXXVI., *infra*, pp. 63-79.

'*November*, 1883.—Some had thought of putting up Dodson, but the Tories had announced that they should run Ridley in opposition to him. There was also a difficulty about filling Dodson's place. Trevelyan was the only man who could be put into the Cabinet without causing the resignation of Courtney and Fawcett, and Mr. Gladstone was still in the humour which he had developed at the time of the offer of the Chief Secretaryship to me, and declared that he would not have the Chief Secretary in the Cabinet, the Viceroy being in it, for this would be to have two Kings of Brentford.'

On November 10th 'Childers seemed the favourite for Speakership,' but on the 12th

'it was decided that Herschell, Goschen, Arthur Peel, and Campbell-Bannerman, were to be offered the Speakership—in that order. It was known that Herschell would refuse, it was thought that Goschen would refuse on the ground of sight, and Peel on the ground of health, and it was intended that Campbell-Bannerman should have it. Herschell did refuse, but Goschen accepted, and had to be shown by his doctor that he could not see members across the House, that he would be capable of confusing Healy with Parnell. . . . Peel accepted, and in spite of his bad health took it, and has kept it till this day (1891).'

There was also continuous discussion behind the scenes as to the two important measures of local government reform—for London and for the country.

'By November 8th, 1883, I had succeeded in bringing Harcourt round on the London police matter . . . to let the City keep their police, and then went to Mr. Gladstone. . . . After twelve o'clock at night Harcourt joined us, and it was agreed to put both London and local government in the Queen's Speech for 1884.'

Dilke spent much work upon the London Government Bill with Harcourt in January of that year; but the Bill, having passed its second reading, was not further proceeded with, owing to House of Commons difficulties. Sir Charles gives the true reason in a letter to his agent:

"One unfortunate thing about the London Bill is that no one in the House cares about it except Dilke, Firth, and the

Prime Minister, and no one outside the House except the Liberal electors of Chelsea. This is the private hidden opinion of Harcourt and of the Metropolitan Liberal members except Firth. I am personally so strong for the Bill that I have not at any time admitted this to Harcourt, and I have only hinted it to Firth. . . ."

When Sir William Harcourt's Bill collapsed, Dilke attempted a minor improvement for the Metropolis by framing a City Guilds Bill, which he described to Mr. Gladstone as following the scheme of the Bills by which the Universities had been reformed. But the Chancellor, Lord Selborne, fought strongly against this proposal, and nothing came of it.

The great scheme for reforming Local Government in England and Wales was meanwhile being considered by the Committee to which it had been referred. Besides Sir Charles Dilke, who naturally acted as Chairman, the Committee consisted of Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Kimberley, Mr. Childers, Lord Carlingford, and Mr. Dodson (who were members of the Cabinet), and Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice. With them were Sir Henry Thring, the celebrated Parliamentary draughtsman, and Mr. Hugh Owen, the Permanent Secretary of the Local Government Board. The task of obtaining agreement, and even sometimes of maintaining order, in a Committee composed of persons representing such a variety of opinion, was no easy one, and it tested to the full the tact and ingenuity of the Chairman. Mr. Dodson, Sir Charles Dilke's immediate predecessor at the Local Government Board, and Lord Carlingford represented the views which had hitherto prevailed in favour of piecemeal and gradual reform. Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Kimberley, and Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice were, on the contrary, supporters of the large Bill which the Chairman had prepared; while Mr. Childers, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, was there mainly to keep a vigilant watch on the local authorities, who were suspected, and not without reason, of desiring to treat the Treasury as a sort of " milch cow," a description which Mr. Gladstone had recently made current in a debate in the House of Commons.

Sir Henry Thring was no mere draughtsman. He had had an immense experience of official life, had known every man of public importance over a long period of years, and had very determined views on most subjects, which he never hesitated to express in clear-cut language and without respect of persons. Mr. Lowe, it was asserted, had once observed at a Cabinet just before Thring entered the room: "I think before he arrives we had better carry a preliminary resolution that we are all d——d fools." As it also happened, Local Government was a subject on which Sir Henry Thring, and not without reason, prided himself as an expert, and the Committee over which Sir Charles Dilke presided consequently had Sir Henry Thring's views conveyed to them in unmistakable terms. One of his special objects of hostility was the Poor Law Union area, which he hoped ultimately to destroy. On the other hand, Mr. Hugh Owen, like nearly all the Local Government Board officials of that time, regarded the Poor Law and everything connected with it as sacred. The controversies were frequently fierce, and on one occasion a serious crisis almost arose owing to Lord Kimberley asking to be informed if Sir Henry Thring was preparing a Bill of his own or was acting on his instructions.

The Bill of 1884 contained almost everything now to be found within the corners of the two great measures of 1888 and 1894, which, the one passed by a Conservative, the other by a Liberal Government, entirely revolutionized the Local Government of England. It was, however, decided to have no Aldermen, but a few ex-officio seats were created on the County Council. Otherwise direct election was the method chosen for all the new Councils. The administration of the Poor Law was kept within the purview of the Bill, after a long controversy as to the method of electing the representatives of urban parishes on the local Poor Law authority, when such an authority included both a borough and a rural district; and the limit of population that was to entitle a borough to a complete independence from the county authority was raised from the figure originally proposed of 20,000 to 100,000 and upwards.

It had been part of Sir Charles Dilke's plan to include education within the framework of the Bill, making the Borough and District Councils the local education authority, with a limited superior jurisdiction in the County Council. But it was found that almost insurmountable difficulties would arise in adding so immense a proposal to an already large measure, and it had to be abandoned.

Mr. Gladstone expressed a decided view on one portion of the Bill only. He gave his strongest support to the proposal that the price of any increased contributions in the shape of Treasury grants should be the complete reform of the conflict of areas and jurisdictions, which added so much to the difficulties and the cost of local administration.*

The question of female councillors inevitably found its way into the discussions, and it was decided in their favour, notwithstanding much divergence of opinion.

'"I am sorry," Childers wrote, "about female councillors, but I suppose I am in a minority, and that we shall soon have women M.P.'s and Cabinet Ministers." This shows that we had decided to clear up the doubt as to the possibility of women serving as councillors, and distinctly to give them the opportunity of so doing. When Ritchie afterwards introduced portions of my Bill, he left this doubtful, and the Lady Sandhurst decision was the result.'†

Sir Charles differed from other members of the Committee in the desire to make the county and not the Local Government Board the sole appellate authority from the district. 'I would, indeed,' he says, 'have gone farther, had I been able to convince my colleagues, and have set up an elective Local Government Board for England.'

Owing to the Parliamentary position, progress with any large measures of reform was, however, difficult even in the preliminary stages; and the road seemed to get more encumbered every day, for the period now under review in-

* In a speech made at Halifax on October 13th, 1885, which occupies nearly the whole of a page of the *Times*, Sir Charles Dilke, after the fall of the Government, gave a full account of the proposed measure.

† See for "Lady Sandhurst decision," *infra*, p. 17.

dicates the high-water mark of Parliamentary obstruction in the skilled hands of the Irish Party and Lord Randolph Churchill, who successfully defied the feeble reforms of procedure of 1882. So it came about that early in 1884 Sir Charles was found rather mournfully writing to Mr. Gladstone:

"We produced to-day our last draft of the Local Government Bill, and had our funeral meeting over it, I fear. I wish to tell you with what spirit and skill Edmond Fitzmaurice has gone into the matter. He is the only man I know who is fit to be President of this Board."

In the autumn of 1883 Sir Charles made what was rare with him, a kind of oratorical progress. He spoke at Glasgow, at Greenock, and lastly at Paisley, where he received the freedom of the burgh for his services connected with the commercial negotiations. His speech at Paisley naturally dealt with commercial policy, and drew an admiring letter from Sir Robert Morier, who was then just bringing to a head the offer of a commercial treaty with Spain. The Cabinet, however, had been much inclined to issue a general declaration on the subject,

'Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville being against all commercial treaties, I for good ones and against bad ones, and Chamberlain for punishing Italy for her conduct to us.'*

When the proposed treaty with Spain, and the changes in duties which it would involve, were before the Cabinet on November 10th,

'I am afraid I played upon Mr. Gladstone's favourite weakness (next to praise of Montenegro)—namely, abuse of the Customs, a department for the routine of which he always had a perfect loathing.'

* 'March 5th, 1883.—We turned to Tariff Treaties: Lord Granville and Mr. Gladstone wishing for a general and abstract declaration against them, and I, with support of Childers, urging most strongly the other view. The proposed declaration was a gratuitous piece of folly, for we were not called on to say anything at all.'

III.

Queen Victoria's demand for investigation into the housing of the poor* had led to prompt administrative action, planned by Sir Charles before he left for his Christmas holiday.

'While I was at Toulon there were issued from the Local Government Board the circulars on the Housing of the Working Class, which I had prepared before leaving London. . . . One circular, December 29th, 1883 . . . called on the Vestries to make use of the powers which they possessed for regulating the condition of houses let in lodgings. Another, December 30th . . . called attention to their powers under the Sanitary Acts, and under the Artisans and Labourers' Dwellings Acts; and one of the same date to a similar effect went to all urban sanitary districts throughout the country, while a further circular with digests of the laws was sent out on January 7th, 1884. This action was afterwards repeated by Chamberlain and others, and taken for new, and again by Walter Long.'

But, naturally, the first man to do it stirred up a hornets' nest. *Punch* of the first week in January, 1884, derides the "Bitter Cry of Bumbledom" against Dilke and Mr. Hugh Owen,† Secretary to the Local Government Board:

"*Us* to blame? That's a capital notion! Drat them and their 'statutes' and 'digests'!
'Convenience of reference.' Ah! that is one of their imperent sly jests.
Removal of Noosances? Yah! If we started on *that* lay perniskers
There is more than a few in the Westries 'ud feel suthin' singein their wiskers,
Or Bumble's a Dutchman. Their Circ'lar—it's mighty obliging—defines 'em,
The Noosances namely; I wonder if parties *read* Circ'lars as signs 'em,
If so, Local Government Boarders must be most oncommonly knowin',
And I'd like to 'eave bricks at that Dilke and his long-winded myrmidon Owen.
The public's got Slums on the brain, and with sanitry bunkum's have busted.

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* See Vol. I., p. 509.

† Years after Sir Hugh Owen, G.C.B., wrote to Dilke: "I shall always remember that I owed my first step in the Order of the Bath to you."

We make a more wigorous use of the powers with which we're entrusted ?
Wy, if we are at it all day with their drains, ashpits, roofs, walls, and windies,
Wot time shall we 'ave for our feeds and our little porochial shindies ?
And all for the 'labouring classes'—the greediest, ongratefullest beggars.
I tell you these Radical lot and their rubbishy littery eggers,
Who talk of neglected old brooms, and would 'ave *us* turn to at their handles,
Are Noosances wus than bad smells and the rest o' their sanitry 'scandals.'"

Sir Charles's main object in local government was to decentralize, and he sought to move in this direction by stimulating the exercise of existing powers and the habit of responsibility in local popularly elected bodies. But inquiry was also necessary.

'On February 8th, 1884, it had been decided to appoint a Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, and Mr. Gladstone had expressed his wish that I should be chairman of the Commission, on which the Prince of Wales desired to serve.'

'On the 9th it was settled that Bodley, my secretary, should be secretary to the Royal Commission. I immediately wrote to Manning to ask him to serve, and he consented on February 12th.'

Lord Salisbury's name lent another distinction to the list, which was completed by February 16th.*

'A very difficult question arose about his precedence. I referred it to the Prince of Wales, who said that he thought Manning ought to take precedence, as a Prince, after Princes of the Blood, and before Lord Salisbury.'

The nice question was referred to Lord Salisbury and to many other authorities, and finally to Lord Sydney,

'who wrote, from the Board of Green Cloth, "that in 1849, at the Queen's Levee at Dublin Castle, the Roman Catholic

* In addition to the Prince, the Cardinal, and Lord Salisbury, Dilke's Commission consisted of Lord Brownlow, Lord Carrington, Mr. Goschen, Sir Richard Cross, the Bishop of Bedford (Dr. Walsham How), Mr. E. Lyulph Stanley, Mr. McCullagh Torrens, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. George Godwin, and Mr. Samuel Morley. To these were added later Mr. Dwyer Gray and Sir George Harrison, for Ireland and Scotland respectively.

Primate followed the Protestant Archbishop, but he was not a Cardinal. *A fortiori* I presume a Cardinal as a Prince of the Holy Roman Empire would have precedence next to the Prince of Wales." It showed, however, extraordinary ignorance on the part of the Lord Steward to suppose that the Holy Roman Empire and the Papal Court were the same thing.'*

'It was on February 12th that I received Sir Henry Ponsonby's letter announcing the approval of the Queen to the Prince serving on the Commission as an ordinary member under my chairmanship, and the Prince of Wales expressed his pleasure at the Queen's approval.'

'On February 22nd the members of the Cabinet present (at a meeting at the Foreign Office) discussed my proposal to put Miss Octavia Hill on my Royal Commission, no woman having ever sat on one; and Harcourt having refused to sign the Commission if it contained a woman's name, Mr. Gladstone, Kimberley, and Northbrook sided with me, and Hartington with Harcourt. Lord Granville said that he was with me on the principle, but against me on the person. After this Mr. Gladstone went round, and said that the decision of the Cabinet was against me. Asquith put several women on a Royal Commission a few years later, but refused them the precedence to which they were entitled, and gave every male member precedence before them.'

Mr. Lyulph Stanley was included to represent his sister, Miss Maude Stanley, whom Sir Charles Dilke had wished to appoint.

Later in the year Sir Charles successfully asserted the principle for which he was contending, by putting women on the Metropolitan Asylums Board. Lady Ducie had the honour of the first invitation to serve, and Sir Charles afterwards added Miss Maude Stanley and others. The question of qualification was discussed, only to be set aside. The law officers

'knew the women would be knocked off if anyone raised the question, and in Lady Sandhurst's case this was afterwards

* The story of how the question of precedence was settled in Manning's favour is given in detail in Mr. Bodley's *Cardinal Manning, and Other Essays* (1912).

made clear; but no one did raise it against my nominees, and they stayed on for life.'

'*March 7th.*—I had now had several interviews with Lord Salisbury and the Prince of Wales about the Royal Commission, and the first meeting of the Commission itself was held on March 5th. . . . We really began our work on March 14th. My work was heavy at this time, with sittings of the Commission twice a week, for which I had to prepare, as I did all the examination in chief of the witnesses, and, indeed, found them all and corresponded with them in advance.'

'The Commission was dull, although it produced a certain amount of valuable evidence, and almost the only amusing incident which occurred in the course of many months was Lord Salisbury making a rather wild suggestion, when Broadhurst put down his pen, and, looking up in a pause, said with an astonished air, "Why, that is Socialism!" at which there was a loud laugh all round.'

'I wrote to Lord Salisbury on May 7th to ask him for his suggestions as to what I called "remedies" to be proposed by our Commission, as I had already made my own list, and wished from this time forward to examine each witness on the same heads, with a view to collecting a body of evidence for the Report, intended to lead to recommendation and legislation upon these particular points. . . .'

Some of Lord Salisbury's suggestions were 'valuable, and still throw much light on his temporary Radicalism, which unfortunately soon wore off.'

'It is clear that on May 9th, 1884, he was contemplating throwing the rates upon the land, and making a long step towards leasehold enfranchisement. Lord Salisbury's proposal on this last head was virtually one for "judicial rents," as far as principle went, and destructive of the old view of the rights of holders of landed property—although, perhaps, not one carrying much advantage to anybody!'

The Report of the Commission proposed the rating of vacant land, but before it was drafted Lord Salisbury condemned the proposal in a memorandum attached to the Report, which Mr. Goschen supported by another independent minute.

Sir Charles sent also a request for the suggestion of

"remedies" to Cardinal Manning, who, says a scribbled note, "is our only revolutionary!"

'On Friday, May 16th, at the Commission the Cardinal handed me his list of suggestions, which were not only revolutionary, but ill-considered, and I have to note how curiously impracticable a schemer, given to the wildest plans, this great ecclesiastic showed himself. He suggested the removal out of London, not only of prisons and infirmaries (which no doubt are under the control of public authorities), but also of breweries, ironworks, and all factories not needed for daily or home work, as a means of giving us areas for housing the working class, suggestions the value or practicability of which I need hardly discuss.'

'On May 18th, I having proposed to add to the Royal Commission a member for Ireland and a member for Scotland before we began to take the Scotch and Irish evidence, and having proposed Gray, the Nationalist member and proprietor of the *Freeman's Journal*, who was the highest Irish authority upon the subject, Ponsonby replied: "Although the Queen cannot say she has a high opinion of Mr. Gray, Her Majesty will approve of his appointment, and that of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, on the Royal Commission." ' Sir Henry Ponsonby was a worthy successor of General Grey—a wise counsellor of much prudence, invaluable to the Queen.'

'Early in June Chamberlain came a good deal to the Local Government Board to consider the evidence which he was to give before my Commission. His view was mine—that in the Metropolis the housing of the working classes could only be dealt with by imposing the most stringent obligations on the owners of property on which artisans' dwellings already existed; and Chamberlain was willing to go so far as to reserve such property permanently for the object, with State interference to secure fair rents. I argued with him that a strong case could be made against him on such points as extension of trade from the City into Whitechapel, extension of fashionable dwellings from Mayfair into Chelsea, and so forth. He then fell back upon a proposal for exchange, and said that at all events there was no practical alternative to his view, an opinion in which I agreed. On a later day in June the Cardinal wrote to me expressing his regret for absence from the Commission, "at which I should like to have seen Lord Salisbury examine Mr. Chamberlain." But the Commission kept up its character for dulness, and nothing noteworthy occurred.'

The Commission on Housing, to which so much of Sir Charles's time was devoted, had an importance, now forgotten, in the modern development of Social Reform.

"Up to five-and-twenty years ago," said a writer in a daily newspaper on Social Reform in 1910, "when the living Sir Charles Dilke was the President of the Local Government Board, no one cared how the poor lived or fared. They could reside in the most ramshackle tenements in insanitary slums, for which, by the way, they were charged exorbitant rents, far higher than what they would now pay for the well-ventilated and well-equipped self-contained houses of the London County Council and building companies which provide accommodation for the industrial classes. Sir Charles saw the abject and helpless condition of the people of London, and resolved, when he succeeded to office, to try and remedy the evils under which they laboured. His enthusiasm in the cause of the poor caught on, and in a short time 'slumming' became a fashionable craze. Committees were formed—the premier one being that which had its headquarters at the Mansion House—to improve the dwellings of the poor. In a short time the movement became a great success, and, that there should be no falling back, medical officers of health, whose sole time was to be devoted to their duties, and battalions of sanitary inspectors, were appointed in every district in the Metropolis."

It cannot be said that "no one cared," for outside the great official movement which Sir Charles Dilke directed were the devoted social workers on whom he called for evidence at the Commission, and to whose labours he always paid tribute; nor must be forgotten the Queen's fine letter calling on her Ministers to act. But, as Miss Octavia Hill wrote to him on March 22nd, 1884, "you among all men realize most clearly that action is more needed than words."

The question of Housing is so inextricably bound up with all the conditions of the poor, with hours of work and with those questions of wages which Sir Charles had first studied with John Stuart Mill, that it is natural to find him presiding over another inquiry which, though prepared for in 1884, was carried out in the first weeks of 1885.

'At the beginning of the new year of 1885 there were completed the final arrangements for my presidency of the Industrial Remuneration Conference, which was held at the end of January at Prince's Hall, Piccadilly, on three mornings and three afternoons. A large sum of money had been given for the purpose of promoting the consideration of the best means for bringing about a more equal division of the products of industry between capital and labour, so that it might become possible for all to enjoy a fair share of material comfort and intellectual culture—possible for all to lead a dignified life, and less difficult to lead a good life. The trustees who were appointed decided to promote a conference on the present system whereby the products of industry are distributed between the various classes of the community, and the means whereby that system should be improved. They then divided the subject into subheads, and asked certain persons to read papers, and an extraordinarily interesting series of discussions was the result. In my own speech in opening the proceedings I called attention to the nature of the German Governmental Socialism, and quoted Prince Bismarck's speeches, showing what was the object which the Prussian Government had in view—namely, to try experiments as to the labour of man with the view "to reach a state of things in which no man could say: 'I bear the burden of society, but no one cares for me.'" This Conference first introduced to London audiences all the leaders of the new Unionism, and future chiefs of the Dockers' Strike. Among the speakers were Arthur Balfour and John Burns, who told us of his dismissal from his employment as an engineer at Brotherhoods'* for attending as delegate of the "S.D.F."'

"I am convinced," wrote Mr. Burns in 1914 from the Office of the Local Government Board, over which he then presided, "that few, if any, conferences held in London in recent years have done more good for the cause of social progress than the Industrial Remuneration Conference of 1885. The Conference focussed public opinion and sympathy upon a large number of important questions, which have since made greater headway than they would have done if the Conference had not taken place. I have the highest opinion of the value of its work, and of the good influence it exercised in stimulating inquiry and action in many directions."

Six years later, when Sir Charles was before the electors of the Forest of Dean as their chosen candidate, he discussed the

* A great engineering firm at Chippenham in Wiltshire.

whole question of limiting by law the hours of work; and he told them how his experience of those days spent in the chair of the Conference in 1885 had converted him "from a position of absolute impartiality to one strongly favourable to legislative limitation."

A speech delivered by him in January, 1884, to the Liberals of Bedford Park, brings together the two sides of his work. For him political reform lay at the very base of social reform; in his opinion the government of London and extension of the franchise ought not to be party questions at all; his desire was to call the whole people of the country into citizenship of the State, and he would make exercise of the voting power compulsory and universal. People said there was no "magic in the vote." He wanted as many citizens as possible to have the right to consider "the sort of magic by which many persons contrived to live at all under the existing social conditions."

A proof of his friendship for the cause of labour, and of his desire to associate manual workers with the administration, was given by him in a use of patronage, in which he departed from his principle of confining it to the men in his office, tendering the chance of official employment to two leading representatives of labour in August, 1884.

'I had a "good" appointment under the Local Government Board to make, and I offered it not only to Broadhurst, but afterwards to Burt. I expected both of them to decline, which both did, but I should have been glad if either of them would have taken it, for both were competent.'

IV.

As to his departmental work, Sir Charles notes in July, 1884:

'I have said but little of my work at the Local Government Board, because, though heavy, it was of an uninteresting nature.'*

* There are, however, many entries, of which this for 1884 is typical: '*September 8th.*—With the Local Government Board Inspectors Fleming and Courtenay to the worst villages in England. I made

'My chief new departure was in connection with the emigration of pauper children, which had been long virtually prohibited, and which I once more authorized.'

Mr. Preston Thomas has fortunately preserved a note of another innovation. The Guardians of a certain union in Cambridgeshire had committed the offence of spending three shillings and threepence of public money on toys for sick pauper children in the workhouse infirmary. The case had occurred before, and the Board's legal advisers had held the expenditure to be unwarrantable, and had surcharged the offending Guardians. Dilke was questioned in the House about the matter, and admitted the previous decisions, but said that the Board had changed its mind. So the children at Wisbech kept their toys; and not only that, but a circular went out from Whitehall suggesting that workhouse girls should be supplied with a reasonable number of skipping-ropes and battledores and shuttlecocks.

The appearance of cholera in French and Spanish ports disquieted the public, and as early as July 25th, 1883,

'I circulated a draft of a Bill to meet the cholera scare, which I carried into law as the Diseases Prevention Act. I did not much believe in cholera, but I took advantage of the scare to carry some useful clauses to deal with smallpox epidemics, the most important clause being one giving compulsory powers for acquiring wharves, by which we could clear the London smallpox hospitals, removing the patients to the *Atlas* and *Castalia* floating hospitals on the Thames. I was a strong partisan of the floating hospitals for smallpox. I used to pay frequent visits to them, and in the early summer of 1885 stayed there from Saturday to Monday; and I used also to go to the camp at Darenth to which we removed convalescents from the ships.'

He notes that he was revaccinated before one of these visits:

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my way from Bridport to Yeovil, Nettlecombe, Powerstock, Maiden Newton, Taunton and its neighbourhood, Wiveliscombe, Bridgwater, and North Petherton.

'Between September 21st and 27th I was visiting workhouses and infirmaries every day, and on the 27th I completed my visits to every workhouse, infirmary, and poor-law school in or belonging to Metropolitan Unions.'

'*September*, 1884.—My arm was in a frightful condition from the vaccine disease, though I was still a teetotaller, now of about ten years' standing.'

During the autumn recess:

'In the course of this week I was every day inspecting schools and asylums, the imbecile asylums at Caterham, Leavesden, and many others; and my smallpox wharves were also giving me much trouble, as Rotherhithe and the other places showed strong objections to them, which I was, however, able to remove.'

But the veteran official who has been already quoted attaches a very different importance to this whole matter. In France and Spain, says Mr. Preston Thomas, the Governments were chiefly concerned to deny the existence of any danger. In England the medical staff demanded such an increase in the number of inspectors as would enable them to take proper precautions at the ports.

"Fortunately, Sir Charles Dilke had become President of the Board, and carried with him a political weight which his two worthy, but not particularly influential, predecessors, Sclater-Booth and Dodson, had not enjoyed. He had one or two passages of arms with Childers, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when it was attempted to interfere with the estimates which he had put forward, and which he declined to defend in Parliament if they were curtailed. There was an appeal to the Premier, and Sir Charles Dilke had come off victorious. So when he proposed largely to increase the medical staff in order to make a sanitary survey of the entire coast, the Treasury's sanction was given, and the work was carried out with far-reaching results. The authorities of the ports . . . were impressed with a sense of their responsibilities; not only did they organize special arrangements for the inspection of ships from infected countries, but they also recognized the necessity of setting their own houses in order in a literal sense, and many of them for the first time displayed activity in providing pure water, efficient sewerage, and a prompt removal of nuisances. . . . The communications of the Board's expert with the local authorities and their officers . . . did something more than lay the foundations of that Public Health System . . . which has saved us from any outbreak of cholera for the last quarter of a century,*

* Written in 1909.

and has reduced the mortality from preventable diseases to a rate which such countries as France and Germany may well envy" (*Work and Play of a Government Inspector*, p. 148).

It should be noted, too, that the first definite action of the Housing Commission concerned the Local Government Board:

'It was decided to ask Parliament to alter its standing orders with regard to persons of the labouring class displaced under Parliamentary Powers, and to insist on local inquiry in such cases, and the approval of the Local Government Board after it has been shown that suitable accommodation had been found for the people displaced. This was done by resolution of both Houses of Parliament.'

V.

The friendliness which had grown up between Sir Charles and Lord Salisbury, and was later in this year to be of public service, is illustrated by an amusing note in the Memoir. Sir Charles Dilke was never a clubman, and had incurred the remonstrances of Sir M. Grant Duff by refusing to take up membership of the Athenæum, as he was entitled to do on entering the Cabinet. But there is a club more august than the Athenæum, and here also Dilke showed indisposition to enter. He notes in May:

'Before this I had been much pressed to accept my election at Grillion's Club on Lord Salisbury's nomination. The Club considers itself such an illustrious body that it elects candidates without telling them they are proposed, and I received notice of my election accompanied by some congratulations. I at first refused to join, but afterwards wrote to the secretary: "Carlingford has been to see me about Grillion's, and tells me that I should have the terrible distinction of being the first man who ever declined to belong to it, an oddity which I cannot face, so . . . I will ask your leave to withdraw my refusal." On May 3rd I breakfasted at the Club for the first time, Mr. Gladstone and a good many other Front Bench people, chiefly Conservatives, being present.'

The meetings of the Housing Commission had also increased the frequency of intercourse between Sir Charles Dilke and the Prince of Wales, who was in this May

'showing a devotion to the work of my Commission which was quite unusual with him, and he cut short his holiday and returned from Royat to London on purpose for our meeting.'

On January 11th, 1884, the Duke of Albany wrote to Sir Charles that he had hoped to call, but was not sure whether he had returned to England. "I write to express a hope that your opinions will coincide with the request which I have made to Lord Derby . . . namely, to succeed Lord Normanby as Governor of Victoria." He referred to their talk at Claremont of his "hopes, which were not realized, of going to Canada." 'The Prince went on to say that, as I had been in Australia, I was "a more competent judge than some others of the Ministers as to the advisability of my appointment."' He spoke of the matter as one in which he was 'vitally interested,' and his 'sincere trust' in Sir Charles's support. The Cabinet agreed to the appointment,

'unless the Queen persisted in her opposition. The matter had been discussed at Eastwell (where I stayed with the Duchess of Edinburgh from the 19th to the 21st) by me with the Duchess as well as with Princess Louise and Lorne, who were also there. The Duke of Edinburgh was not there, but at Majorca in his ship. The party consisted of Nigra, the Italian Ambassador, the Wolseleys, Lord Baring and his sister Lady Emma, and Count Adlerberg of the Russian Embassy, in addition to the Princess Louise and Lorne already named.'

'On January 24th there was a regular Cabinet. The Queen had written that she would not allow Prince Leopold to go to Victoria.'

On March 28th 'we heard of the death of Prince Leopold,' codicils to whose will Sir Charles had witnessed in the preceding year. 'All newspapers wrote of the pleasant boy as though he had been a man of literary genius.'

But anxious as Sir Charles had been to further Prince

Leopold's wishes, and in spite of his 'respect for his memory,' he could not allow a principle, for which he always fought, to be waived.

'The Queen wrote to Mr. Gladstone at this time (April 5th) with regard to provision for the child and possible posthumous child of the Duke of Albany, and I wrote to Mr. Gladstone that I could not possibly agree to any provision for them, for which there was no exact precedent, without the Select Committee which I had previously been promised as regarded any new application.'

On April 22nd Mr. Gladstone alluded 'to a letter to the Queen, but he did not read it to us,' and Sir Charles again insisted 'upon inquiry before the proposal of any provision for which there was no direct precedent.'

'At the Cabinet of Monday, April 28th, we found that the Queen was indignant with us for our refusal to make further provision for the Duchess of Albany. . . . None of the precedents of the century warranted provision for children in infancy. It was agreed that Mr. Gladstone was to write to the Queen again, but "our negative answer is only applicable to the case where the children are in infancy." In other words, we did not wish to bind those who might come after us, but the phrase was not to commit us as to what we would do in five years' time.'

CHAPTER XXXV

EGYPT
1884

I.

At the close of 1883 the destruction of Hicks's army had made clear to all that the Soudan was, for the time at least, lost to Egypt; and close upon this disaster in the central region had followed defeats on the Red Sea coast. But Egyptian garrisons were holding out at Sinkat, some fifty miles from the port of Suakim, and at Tokar, only twenty miles from the coast. In October, 1883, a small force sent to relieve Sinkat was cut up by the Dervishes under Osman Digna; in November, a larger column of 500, accompanied by the British Consul, was utterly routed in an attempt to reach Tokar. General Baker, with his newly formed gendarmerie, was then ordered to Suakim. He desired to enlist the services of Zebehr Pasha, a famous leader of men, but a former dealer in slaves. To this the British authorities objected, and Zebehr was not sent. Baker went, attempted with 3,500 troops to reach Tokar, and on February 2nd, 1884, lost 2,000 of them near the wells of El Teb. Both Tokar and Sinkat soon after fell into the hands of the Dervishes.

Long before this event, the evacuation of the Soudan had been decreed. A peremptory mandate from the British Government was sent to Cherif Pasha, the Egyptian Prime Minister, who, as he had intimated that he would do, resigned rather than be responsible for giving up so vast a possession. On January 8th, Nubar took office to carry out the prescribed policy. But the problem was

how to get away the garrisons, and, since England had ordered evacuation, the Egyptian Government looked to England for assistance.

'On January 16th I noted: "Baring wants to make us send a British officer to conduct the retreat from Khartoum. I have written to Lord Granville to protest." Baring had been pressing for an answer to his suggestion named above. I had all along fought against the "Hicks Expedition," and this seemed a consequence. The Egyptian Government had resigned, and the sole supporter of the abandonment policy among the Egyptians in Egypt was the Khedive himself; but Nubar was sent for, and accepted office (with a number of cyphers) to carry it into effect. On January 10th Lord Granville had telegraphed to Baring, without my knowledge, "Would Gordon or Wilson be of use?"* On the 11th Baring replied, "I do not think that the services of Gordon or Wilson can be utilized at present"; and after a reply had been received I saw the telegrams. The earlier Gordon suggestions by Granville, now revealed by E. Fitzmaurice from the *Granville Papers*, and expounded in Cromer's (1908) book, were never before the Cabinet.†

'On the 14th Lord Granville telegraphed to Baring: "Can you give further information as to prospects of retreat from (? for) army and residents at Khartoum, and measures taken? Can anything more be done?" Power, our Consular Agent at Khartoum, had also been told that he might leave. On January 16th Baring telegraphed: "The Egyptian Government would feel obliged if Her Majesty's Government would send out at once a qualified British officer to go to Khartoum with full powers, civil and military, to conduct the retreat." Lord Granville then telegraphed for Gordon, and on the 18th I was summoned suddenly to a meeting at the War Office in Hartington's room, at which were present, before I arrived, Hartington, Lord Granville and Lord Northbrook, and Colonel Gordon. Gordon said that he believed that the danger at Khartoum had been "grossly exaggerated," and that the two Englishmen there had "lost their heads"; he would be able to bring away the garrisons without difficulty. We decided that he should go to Suakim to collect information and report on the situation in the Soudan. This was the sole

* Colonel Sir Charles Wilson. See his *Life*, by Sir Charles Watson, p. 244.

† *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii., pp. 381, 382.

decision taken, but it was understood that if he found he could get across he should go on to Berber. Gordon started at night on the same day.

'On January 22nd the first subject mentioned was that of Egyptian finance, a Rothschild loan for six months being suggested, but nothing settled. The Cabinet approved our action in sending Gordon. But they had before them a great deal more than what we had done—namely, what he had done himself. On his road between London and Brindisi he had prepared a series of decrees which he telegraphed to us and which we telegraphed to Baring. In these he announced the restoration to the various Sultans of the Soudan of their independence, and he made the Khedive say: "I have commissioned General Gordon, late Governor-General of the Soudan, to proceed there as my representative, and to arrange with you" (the peoples of the Soudan) "for the evacuation of the country and the withdrawal of my troops." He then made the Khedive appoint him "Governor-General for the time necessary to accomplish the evacuation." He also telegraphed to the Hadendowa and Bishareen Arabs of the desert between Suakim and Berber, directing them to meet him at Suakim, and saying that he should be there in fourteen days. In sending these we told Baring: "Suggestions made by Gordon. We have no local knowledge sufficient to judge. You may settle terms, and act upon them at once, as time presses, or after consultation with him." Mr. Gladstone did not object, although strongly opposed to our undertaking responsibility in the Soudan, because Gordon still spoke in every sentence of conducting the evacuation; but reading his proclamations in the light of his subsequent change of mind, and desire to stay in Khartoum and be supported by force, it seems clear that he had deceived us and did not really mean evacuation. This, however, could not yet be seen from the words he used. I wrote to Lord Granville on January 22nd, to point out that in addition to the danger in the Soudan, which had been foreseen, there was a risk that Gordon might get himself carried off alive into the desert by some of the Arab chiefs that he was to meet, and that in that case we should have to send an expedition after him.

'On January 31st there was a meeting at the War Office about Egypt between Hartington, Lord Granville, Edmond Fitzmaurice and myself. As the facts about Gordon were beginning to be misrepresented in the Press, Lord Granville

set them down in writing.* It had been stated, and was afterwards repeated by Justin McCarthy in his history, that the mission on which we sent Gordon "was in direct opposition to his own ideas. He was not in favour of the abandonment of the Soudan or the evacuation of Khartoum." It had also been said that the whole mission had been forced upon us by the Press—*i.e.*, by Stead, in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Lord Granville gave me a memorandum saying that Gordon had acknowledged that the statements in the *Pall Mall* were "not accurate." Lord Granville went on to say that he did not think that Gordon could be said to have "changed his mind. It appeared in his conversation with Wolseley on the Tuesday that he (Gordon) was not decided in his opinion, and that he was as likely to recommend one course as another. . . . I told him that we would not send him out to re-open the whole question, and he then declared himself ready to go out merely to help in the evacuation of the interior of the Soudan. He is not remarkably precise in conversation, though I found him much more so than Wolseley had led me to expect."

'Lord Granville had previously written to me on this point: "The papers seem to think that Gordon is a new discovery by the Government under pressure of the Press. It happens that I consulted Malet on the subject months ago. But after communicating with Cherif he sent me an unfavourable reply. I subsequently consulted Baring, who agreed with Cherif that it was best not to do so. I consulted him again after the change of Ministry, with the same result. On the other hand Gordon was in Syria, having declared before leaving England that he would not enter the Egyptian service. It was only on his return to England that I heard indirectly that, although he had no wish to go, he would willingly obey the orders of Her Majesty's Government and act under the instructions of Sir Evelyn Baring and the orders of General Stephenson. Having got the full concurrence of Sir E. Baring by telegraph, the matter was arranged."

'The fact was that it was Wolseley, Gordon's friend, who suggested that he should be sent and who induced him to go; but Wolseley's account of the matter could not, I fear, be trusted, as he is more inclined to attack Gladstone than to let out anything which in the light of subsequent events might be unpleasant to himself.

* See *Life of Gladstone*, vol. iii., pp. 152-155; *Life of Granville*, vol. ii., pp. 381-385 and 512, where a letter from Lord Cromer on General Gordon's instructions is printed; and chap. xvi. ('Gordon and the Soudan') in *The Development of the European Nations, 1870-1900*, by Dr. J. Holland Rose.

'Edmond Fitzmaurice had drawn up an elaborate memorandum for our meeting at the War Office, which I have, with my own corrections. He thought that the public was hostile to us on four grounds: our non-interference to stop Hicks;* our failure to withdraw the garrisons of Khartoum and of the Equatorial Provinces in time to avoid disaster; our failure to relieve Sinkat; and, on the other hand, our decision to force the Egyptians to evacuate the Soudan in the face of defeat, a decision which had overturned Cherif Pasha. With regard to Hicks, we could only tell the truth, which was that our policy was to limit, not extend, the sphere of our responsibilities in Egypt; that we followed the advice we got, which was either for doing exactly what we did, or for a moderate support of Hicks, which latter we declined. Our opponents were prophesying after the event. We should have taken a great responsibility had we absolutely forbidden the Egyptian Government to make use of their own troops (not including any portion of the army officered by English officers under Sir Evelyn Wood for the defence of Lower Egypt) to crush the Mahdi. Hicks had at first defeated the Mahdi in every encounter and cleared him out of the whole country east of the Nile.† The main point, however, and that of present importance, was our forcing upon the Egyptians the policy of evacuating the Soudan after Hicks's defeat. Fitzmaurice wrote: "The Soudan could not be held without the assistance of England, and it is not a British interest to hold the Soudan. . . . The cost of the Soudan is one of the causes which ruin the Egyptian Treasury." Edmond Fitzmaurice then went on to explain in his memorandum the reasons which had forced us to wait until January 4th before we had told the Egyptian Government as to withdrawal from the interior of the Soudan, including Khartoum—"that the Ministers must carry out the advice offered them, or forfeit their places."

'On January 9th we had been told from Khartoum that, if a retreat was ordered at once, it could be safely effected; and it was on the next day, the 10th, that we offered the services of Colonels Gordon and Sir Charles Wilson, which were declined. It was not till January 16th that we were

* General Hicks advanced west of the Nile, contrary to the views of Lord Dufferin, who wished him to limit his advance to the province lying between the bifurcation of the Blue and White Nile. See the *Life of Dufferin*, by Sir Alfred Lyall, vol. ii., pp. 56, 57.

† Hicks Pasha complained that directly Lord Dufferin had left Cairo for Constantinople, he ceased to receive adequate support from the Egyptian Government (*Life of Dufferin*, vol. ii., p. 55).

able to induce the Egyptians, even under their new withdrawal Government, to ask for a British officer, and on the 18th Gordon was sent. Gordon, however—who had left us to go to Suakim, and for whom we had drawn up a route from Suakim to Berber, in case he should go forward, and negotiated with the tribes for his free passage, and of whom we had telegraphed to Baring, "He does not wish to go to Cairo"—went to Cairo, "at Baring's" suggestion. He did not even land at Alexandria, but he was stopped by Baring at Port Said when on his way to Suakim, Baring sending Sir Evelyn Wood to meet him. Baring had already given orders, through Nubar, to commence the evacuation. Gordon had telegraphed to us requesting us to send Zebehr Pasha to Cyprus—that is, arbitrarily to arrest him and deport him. Yet, when he reached Cairo, at his own wish he had had an interview with this very man, and shortly afterwards he telegraphed to us, asking leave to take him to Khartoum and to make him virtually Governor of the Soudan, which, indeed, would have been entirely outside our power; for Forster, supported by the Anti-Slavery Society and the Conservatives, would at once have upset us in the House of Commons and reversed the policy. Wolseley had already begun to press as early as the 23rd for the sending of an expedition viâ Suakim and Berber.

'On January 26th Gordon had left for Khartoum without any communication with us upon the question whether he should go, and the last thing we had from him before he started was a memorandum in which, among other things, he said of the Soudan: "Few men can stand its fearful monotony and deadly climate." He insisted on absolute authority, and Stewart, who was with him, did the same for him, and, backing up his chief's arguments at this moment against Zebehr, said that Zebehr's return would undoubtedly be a misfortune to the Soudanese, and also a direct encouragement to the slave trade.

'On February 1st we received a telegram from Baring, telling us that Gordon had taken with him proclamations of evacuation, and other proclamations less direct, with authority to issue those which he thought best; but "he fully understands that he is to carry out the policy of evacuation, in which he expressed to me his entire agreement. I have sent home by last mail my instructions to him, which leave no doubt on this point, and which were drafted at his request and with his full approval. . . .

There is no sort of difference between his views and those entertained by Nubar Pasha and myself." Here ended our responsibility, because it must be remembered that Gordon at Khartoum was entirely outside our reach, and openly told us that he should not obey our orders when he did not choose to do so. From this moment we had only to please ourselves as to whether we should disavow him and say that he was acting in defiance of instructions, and must be left to his fate, or whether we should send an expedition to get him out.

'Doubtless "we" wavered between these two opinions. Mr. Gladstone from the first moment that Gordon broke his orders was for the former view. Lord Hartington from the first moment was for the latter. Chamberlain and I supported Hartington, although we fully recognized Gordon's violations of his orders in much of his action at Khartoum, where he changed the policy agreed upon with Baring and with us to that expressed by him in the words, "Smash the Mahdi." Many members of the Cabinet went backwards and forwards in their opinion, but the circumstances were of incredible difficulty, and it must be remembered that we were not sure of being allowed to carry out either policy; and not only was it difficult to decide which of the two was right, but it was also difficult to decide whether either policy was possible—that is to say, whether the one adopted would not be immediately upset by a Parliamentary vote. The Liberal party in the House of Commons was divided on the matter, the Whigs generally wishing for an expedition, and the Radicals being hot for immediate abandonment of the Soudan, which meant abandonment of Gordon. The Conservatives were divided; most of them probably wished for an expedition, but they were afraid to say so; and Randolph Churchill, whose strength at this time was immense, was in full agreement with Labouchere and Wilfrid Lawson, and was denouncing the retention of the Soudan as a violation of the principles of freedom.

'Gordon on his way up and on his arrival at Khartoum issued extraordinary proclamations. Arriving there alone, but with incredible prestige, he was hailed as father of the people; he burned the taxation books and the whips upon the public place; he released the prisoners from the gaol; he sent away the commander of the garrison with the words, "Rest assured you leave this place as safe as Kensington Park." He declared the Mahdi "Sultan of Kordofan." Gordon, of all men in the world, sanctioned slavery by

another written document; and he then asked us to send the arch slave-driver Zebehr to his help, which we thought on Baring's truthful opinion of the moment that we ought not to do, and which we certainly could not have done. I thought and still think that Gordon had lost his senses, as he had done on former critical occasions in his life; but the romantic element in his nature appealed to me, and, while I could not but admit that he had defied every instruction which had been given to him, I should have sent an expedition to bring him out, although thinking it probable that when Wolseley reached him he would have refused to come.'

While Gordon was on his way to Khartoum, which he reached on February 18th, the defeat at El Teb had occurred, and the question arose as to what should be done in the Eastern Soudan.

'On February 6th the Cabinet met twice, and at our second meeting it was decided to send marines to Suakim.

'On Thursday, February 7th, I visited the Admiralty with Pauncefote in order to take in hand the defence of the Red Sea coast against the Arabs, and then I went to the War Office, where I met Hartington, Northbrook, Wolseley, and Cooper Key, in order to concert steps. When I passed through the Secretary's room after the meeting, and stayed for a moment to talk with Hobart and Fleetwood Wilson, the Duke of Cambridge (whose room opened into theirs, and who had evidently been lying in wait for me) rushed out and carried me off into his room, and made much of me, with an enthusiastic desire to help an expedition. At night, Hartington, Chamberlain, and I met in Hartington's room and decided to press for relief of Gordon.

'On February 8th Chamberlain wrote to me, "I should like to telegraph to Baring, 'If you think that employment of British troops could relieve beleaguered garrisons in Soudan without danger, you are authorized to concert measures with Evelyn Wood.'" A Cabinet was called at the wish of Hartington, Chamberlain, and myself, for this day upon this point. Hartington, Harcourt, Northbrook, Carlingford, Chamberlain, and I, were for asking Gordon if a demonstration at Suakim would help him. Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville, very strong the other way, broke up the meeting sooner than agree.'

'Gordon had acted as Governor-General of the Soudan with-

out having told us that he had accepted this appointment, and we had had to ask on February 4th a question which had been answered by Baring on the 5th, to the effect that Gordon had "at his own request" been appointed Governor-General. On February 6th Baring had telegraphed stating that Gordon had said that it was possible he might go to the Mahdi and not be heard of for two months, as the Mahdi might keep him as a hostage for Zebehr. On the same day we telegraphed to Baring approving his having told Gordon that there would be the strongest objections to his placing himself in the Mahdi's power. On February 7th we received a despatch by post from Baring in which he informed us that, while Gordon would probably ask for Zebehr, "it would certainly not be desirable to send him . . . for he is manifestly animated by a feeling of deep resentment against General Gordon." At the same time Baring forwarded a shorthand report of the meeting between Gordon, Zebehr, Baring, Stewart, Colonel Watson, Sir Evelyn Wood, and Nubar, at which Zebehr had told Gordon that he had entrusted his son to him, "and told you he was thenceforth your son. He was only sixteen years of age. . . . I entrusted my son to you. . . . But you killed my son whom I entrusted to you. He was as your own son." *Gordon:* "Well, well, I killed my own son. There is an end of it." *Zebehr:* "And then you brought my wives and women and children in chains to Khartoum, a thing which for my name in the Soudan was most degrading."

'By the same mail we received a despatch from Baring in which he made it clear that Gordon's instructions had Gordon's full approval. "He expressed to me his entire concurrence in the instructions. The only suggestion he made was in connection with the passage in which, speaking of the policy of abandoning the Soudan, I had said, 'I understand also that you entirely concur in the desirability of adopting this policy.' General Gordon wished that I should add the words 'and that you think it should on no account be changed.' These words were accordingly added."

'Between this Cabinet and the next we received, on February 9th, a telegram from Baring to the effect that he was sending home a letter from Gordon to the King of the Belgians in which he urged the king to appoint him Governor of the Equatorial Provinces, Gordon's idea being to go there from Khartoum; and Baring stated his own view that

we should forbid Gordon to go south of Khartoum. In his letter, which was dated February 1st, Gordon said that the King of the Belgians had told him that he would take over the Provinces with the troops in them, when Gordon had been at Brussels immediately before we sent him out; but not one word had Gordon ever breathed of this; and when we first heard of it he was virtually beyond our reach, seated, when our answer arrived, at Khartoum, and little disposed to listen to us, although on some points, for a few days, he pretended to listen.

'On February 12th Baring telegraphed that he hoped that "H.M.G. will not change any of the main points of their policy"; but, as will be seen a little later, Baring soon changed his own, adopting the new policy of Gordon, and pressing it upon us.

'On February 12th it was decided, against Mr. Gladstone, to send an expedition to the Red Sea Coast.

'On February 13th we had before us a statement which had been made the previous day by Randolph Churchill, to the effect that in the summer of 1883 General Gordon had offered to go to the Soudan, and that the Government had telegraphed to him accepting his offer, and then written to him declining it. Lord Granville instructed me to say that the whole story was one gigantic concoction. I then asked Hartington if he knew anything about it; and Lord Wolseley ultimately discovered that Randolph Churchill had confused the Congo with the Nile, an amusing example of his harum-scarum recklessness. Gordon had telegraphed from Syria in October for leave to accept service under the King of the Belgians on the Congo, and the Commander-in-Chief had replied by telegraph that the Secretary of State declined to sanction his employment. In transmission the word "declines" was changed into "decides," which exactly reversed its sense, so that Gordon had received a confirming letter consistent with the telegram as sent, but exactly reversing the sense of the telegram as received. He had told the story which Churchill had heard, but altered from one side of Africa to the other.'

On February 14th Sir Charles made effective use of this blunder in the debate upon the vote of censure concerning Egypt. It was a debating speech which, he himself notes, 'had extraordinary success.' Lord Randolph Churchill had been more than usually aggressive, and Sir Charles

hammered him with detailed facts.* The debate on this vote of censure, occasioned by the fall of Sinkat, occupied the House for five days. The motion was defeated by forty-nine.

'On February 14th I found that Lord Granville had not answered an important question from Baring about Wood's Egyptians which had been received by us on the 13th, and that because he had not seen it. We had started a red label as a danger-signal for pressing notes; but Lord Granville's room was full of red-labelled notes not touched.'

He records his remonstrances with Lord Granville as to the non-employment of Sir Evelyn Wood's Egyptians. On February 18th there was a Cabinet 'partly upon this subject. It was decided to send reinforcements to Egypt.'

'On February 21st there was another Cabinet which again discussed the Egyptian question and decided to send Wood's Egyptians to Assouan. On the 15th Gordon had reassured us by telling us that all communication between Cairo and the Soudan would be finally at an end within three months' (that is, that evacuation would be easily carried out). 'On February 18th we had heard that on the 17th Gordon had issued a proclamation saying that the Government would not interfere with the buying and selling of slaves; and this telegram, having got out from Cairo, produced a storm in England. On the 19th there occurred another matter which was considered by the Cabinet at the same time—the absolute refusal of Admiral Hewett, and very proper refusal, to issue a proclamation calling on the chiefs from Suakim to go peacefully to meet Gordon at Khartoum, inasmuch as the Admiral knew "that English troops are about to be sent against the people in question." The issue of this proclamation had been recommended by Wolseley, who thinks that Governments exist for the purpose of deceiving enemies in war for the benefit of generals.

'On the same day, February 19th, we had received a telegram which had been sent off from Khartoum by Gordon on the 18th, asking that Zebehr should be sent to the Soudan, "be made K.C.M.G., and given presents." This was backed

* He comments on the 20th on the opinions expressed to him as to his powers of debate: "This is a curious position for a man who has no natural gift of speech. I can remember when I was the worst speaker that ever spoke at all."

by Stewart, so far as that he said that someone should be sent, adding that he was not sure whether Zebehr was the best man. It was clear from Gordon's proposed conditions that Zebehr was to be free to prosecute the slave trade. In another memorandum on the same day Gordon said that we must "give a commission to some man and promise him the moral support of H.M.G. . . . It may be argued that H.M.G. would thus be giving . . . moral support to a man who will rule over a slave state. . . . This nomination of my successor must . . . be direct from Her Majesty's Government. . . . As for the man, H.M.G. should select one above all others, namely Zebehr." Baring now backed this opinion up, so that we were face to face with an absolute change of front on the part of Gordon and Baring, and a partial change of front on the part of Stewart. On the other hand, Baring, at the same time when he told us to appoint Zebehr, added: "I am quite certain that Zebehr hates Gordon bitterly, and that he is very vindictive. I would not on any account risk putting Gordon in his power. . . . He is, to my personal knowledge, exceedingly untruthful. . . . I cannot recommend his being promised the moral support of Her Majesty's Government. He would scarcely understand the phrase, and, moreover, I do not think he would attach importance to any support which was not material. . . . I doubt the utility of making conditions. Zebehr would probably not observe them long." Baring further proposed that Zebehr should be given money, and he left us to judge of the effect of the whole scheme on public opinion in England. Colonel Watson, who had been present at the meeting between Zebehr and Gordon, informed us that to let Gordon and Zebehr be together in the Soudan "would entail the death of either one or other of them." On the 21st Gordon telegraphed to the newspapers explaining away his slave trade proclamation, but its terms were even worse than could have been gathered from the first summary, which was all that we had received.

'On February 21st we received the text of Gordon's proclamation, which contained the words, "I confer upon you these rights, that henceforth none shall interfere with your property," and spoke with apparent regret of "severe measures taken by Government for the suppression of slave traffic, and seizure and punishment of all concerned."

'On February 26th there was a meeting of Mr. Gladstone, Hartington, Childers, Chamberlain, Dodson, and

myself, to approve a telegram from Hartington to General Graham;* and on the next day again, the 27th, a meeting of Lord Granville, Hartington, Northbrook, and myself, which decided to invite the Turk to show himself at the Red Sea ports. On the 29th there was a Cabinet at which it was decided that the Turk must approve our future ruler of the Soudan, and that British troops were to go as far as Assouan if Baring thought it necessary.

'On February 27th Gordon had frightened us out of our senses by telegraphing that, having put out his programme of peace, and allowed time to elapse, he was now sending out his troops to show his force; and another telegram from him said: "Expedition starts at once to attack rebels." On the same day he telegraphed that he had issued a proclamation "that British troops are now on their way, and in a few days will reach Khartoum." It was very difficult to know what to do with this amazing lie: solemnly to point out to him by telegraph that it was a lie was hardly of much use with a man of Gordon's stamp; and what was done was to send a strong private telegram to Baring to communicate with him about it, but the result was not encouraging, for it was the first ground for the desperate quarrel which Gordon afterwards picked with Baring, and for his charge against Baring of inciting the Government to drive him to his death.

'On the next day, February 28th, Gordon, having heard that Zebehr was refused, telegraphed his policy of smashing up the Mahdi, which, however, he seemed inclined to attempt with a most inadequate force. "Mahdi must be smashed up. Mahdi is most unpopular, and with care and time could be smashed. . . . If you decide on smashing Mahdi, then send another hundred thousand pounds, and send 200 Indian troops to Wady Halfa, and an officer to Dongola under pretence to look out quarters for troops. . . . At present it would be comparatively easy to destroy Mahdi." Gordon had also telegraphed to Baring to recommend that 3,000 black Egyptian troops should be kept in the Soudan, and completely throwing over the evacuation policy. Baring added for himself: "There are obviously many contradictions in General Gordon's different proposals"; but he went on to express his agreement in Gordon's new policy, strongly supported the selection of Zebehr, and sneered at us for having regard to uninstructed opinion in England. On the same day Gordon telegraphed: "If a hundred British

* General Graham was in command of the expedition to Suakim.

troops were sent to Assouan or Wady Halfa, they would run no more risk than Nile tourists, and would have the best effect." At the same time Baring said: "I certainly would not risk sending so small a body as 100 men." It will be seen in how great a difficulty the Government were placed; but Baring's position was, in fact, as difficult as our own. We were evidently dealing with a wild man under the influence of that climate of Central Africa which acts even upon the sanest men like strong drink.

'On the same day Gordon telegraphed to us completely changing his ground about Suakim. He had previously prevented our doing anything except trying to relieve the towns blockaded, but on March 1st told us to do something to draw the Hadendowa down to Suakim. On the 2nd, General Graham having beaten the Arabs at Teb, the Admiral asked us to send more troops and to threaten Osman Digna's main force, a suggestion which concurred with Gordon's. And on March 5th the Cabinet met and decided that, while it was impossible to send Zebehr to the Soudan, General Graham was to be allowed to attack Osman Digna's main force. . . . Chamberlain then suggested that I should go to Egypt: Hartington evidently thought that somebody should go, and thought he had better go himself. Lord Granville would not have either, as might have been expected. . . . I suggested a way out of the Zebehr difficulty, and wrote to Chamberlain: "If I were sent out to do this, I believe I should get away the forces from the interior and have Zebehr elected, entirely without our action, by the Notables at Khartoum. On the whole, this would do if we did not do it. This would, in my opinion, be improved by Turkish approval under Turkish suzerainty, but that you do not like." Chamberlain answered: "Perhaps we cannot help having Zebehr, but surely we ought not to promote him, directly or indirectly; not only because he is a slave-hunter, but also because he will probably attack Egypt sooner or later, and very likely with the help of our subsidy." I replied: "I am quite clear that we must not set up Zebehr, but if we retire we cannot prevent his election by the Notables; and they would elect him." In the meantime Gordon had completely thrown over Baring's suggestion that Zebehr should be sent (but so sent that he and Gordon should not be in the Soudan together) by telegraphing that the combination at Khartoum of Zebehr and himself was "an absolute necessity," and that it would be "absolutely necessary" for him to stay at Khartoum with

Zebehr for four months; and Stewart had now completely come over to Gordon's policy about Zebehr personally. On the other hand, Baring and the military authorities in Egypt were unanimously opposed to the idea of sending a small British force to Wady Halfa.

'On March 7th it was decided to give an inland district to the Abyssinians, but not to offer them a port (which was what they wanted), on account of its not being ours to give away from the Turks. The Cabinet would not hear of receiving a Turkish Commissioner at Cairo.

'On March 11th we further considered pressing demands from Gordon and Baring for Zebehr. Mr. Gladstone had taken to his bed, but was known to be strongly in favour of sending Zebehr. The Cabinet were unanimous the other way, and Hartington was sent to see Mr. Gladstone, we waiting till he returned. When he came back, he laconically stated what had passed as follows: "He thinks it very likely that we cannot make the House swallow Zebehr, but he thinks he could." Morley has told this, but the words which he took verbally from me are less good.* Baring on the 6th had recommended a further attack on Osman Digna, which he thought might open the Berber route. On the 9th we received Gordon's replies to our telegrams of the 5th, showing that he had done nothing towards the evacuation of Khartoum except by sending away the sick. He admitted that it was possible that "Zebehr, who hates the tribes, did stir up the fires of revolt, in hopes that he would be sent to quell it. It is the irony of fate that he will get his wish if sent up." On the same day Baring informed us that it was clear that Gordon now had no influence outside Khartoum, and that he contemplated the despatch of British troops. The Anti-Slavery Society had strongly protested against the employment of Zebehr, and they pointed out to us the records of murders "in which this man has stood the foremost and the principal actor. . . . Countenance . . . of such an individual by the British Government would be a degradation for England and a scandal to Europe." W. E. Forster, amid loud cheers from the Conservatives, protested in advance in the House of Commons against the policy of sending Zebehr. On March 11th we had received in the morning from Baring twelve telegrams from Gordon, of the most extraordinary nature, which Baring had answered: "I am most anxious to help and support you in every way, but I find it very difficult

* *Life of Gladstone*, vol. iii., p. 159.

to understand exactly what it is you want." Besides deciding that Zebehr could not be sent, the Cabinet changed its mind about the employment of Turks in the Red Sea, and decided that they could not be allowed to go there at present.

'On March 13th the matter was again considered by a Cabinet, which was not called a Cabinet as Mr. Gladstone was in bed and Chamberlain was at Birmingham, and on the 14th we met again, still retaining our opinion; and on Sunday, the 16th, Mr. Gladstone at last unwillingly gave up Zebehr as impossible.*

'I had been at this time working out the facts connected with the two routes to Khartoum in case an expedition should be sent, and had made up my own mind in favour of the Nile route; Wolseley still being the other way.

'On March 17th, I wrote to Lord Northbrook to protest against a proclamation which had been issued by the Admiral and General at Suakim offering a reward for Osman Digna, and I wrote also to Hartington upon the same subject, stating that I would not defend it, and that if it were "not disapproved, and the disapproval made public, I cannot remain a member of the Government." Northbrook would not admit that he had disapproved it, but Hartington did, and also informed me that Northbrook had telegraphed. Lord Granville agreed with me that the proclamation was not defensible, and it was as a fact withdrawn, although the Admiral was very angry.

'Mr. Gladstone had gone down to Coombe, near Wimbledon. On March 22nd we held a Cabinet without him. . . . Harcourt was now writing to me in favour of the view "that we must get out of Egypt as soon as possible at any price. The idea of our administering it or of the Egyptian army defending it is equally out of the question." On the 25th we had another Cabinet without Mr. Gladstone. Turning to Gordon, we decided that a force was not to be sent to Berber; but I noted in my diary: "It will *have* to be sent next autumn, I believe"; but when I said to Berber, it must be remembered, of course, that there were two ways of reaching Berber, and Lord Hartington, Brett, and I, now turned steadily to the consideration of which of those two ways should be taken. It will be remembered that we already had a report in print as to the Suakim-Berber route.† We now obtained from Wolseley a general report, which was afterwards printed and circulated to the Cabinet on

* *Life of Granville*, vol. ii., p. 388.

† See p. 33: 'We had drawn up a route from Suakim to Berber.'

April 8th. Lord Wolseley, preparing for the sending of a military force to Khartoum this autumn, stated that his force must be exclusively British, for he doubted whether the very best of our Indian regiments could stand the charges of the Arabs, besides which our natives took the field encumbered with followers. Lord Roberts, who was not given to boasting, told me, long afterwards, that he, on the other hand, was sure that he could have marched from Suakim to the Nile and Khartoum with an exclusively Indian force. It is the case that our best Gurkha troops have sometimes stood when white troops have run. Wolseley had now come round to a boat expedition, which I had been for a long time urging, upon information which I had obtained for myself from the Admiralty, and which was afterwards printed by the Foreign Intelligence Committee at the Admiralty, and circulated to the Cabinet in April, a further document upon the subject being circulated to the Cabinet in May. It must be remembered that the date of passing the cataracts was settled for us by the high Nile, and that there was only one time of year at which the expedition could be safely sent.

'The Cabinet of March 25th further decided that Graham must soon be brought away from Suakim.

'On the next evening, March 26th, when the Ministers were dining with the Speaker, we received a very unpleasant telegram from Baring, pointing, we thought, to a possible resignation unless it was promised to send an expedition to Khartoum. I suggested the following answer: "We adhere to our instructions of the 25th, 160 Secret. We cannot send an expedition now, and entertain the gravest objection to contemplating an expedition in the autumn." This answer was rejected in favour of one suggested by Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville. Our telegram 160 Secret had been an absolute refusal, and my additional words had been intended by me slightly to open the door, which was as much as I could hope that the Cabinet would do. But the telegram actually sent on March 28th (165 Secret, extended in 191) was to the effect that we were unable to alter the instructions, and it was accompanied by two long despatches, virtually written by Harcourt, and afterwards laid before Parliament, explaining our reasons for not sending Zebehr and for not sending an expedition. Gordon had been communicating with us with difficulty, as the telegraph was broken from time to time, but he had told us that if he was to evacuate Khartoum he wished to resign

his commission and to take all his steam vessels and stores to the equatorial provinces, "which he would consider under the King of the Belgians." This Baring had told him he must not do. Baring had rejected every possible alternative except the sending of Zebehr, and Zebehr we could not have sent. In discussing the question of an expedition to Khartoum, Baring had told us that Gordon was "not in any immediate danger. He has provisions for six months." Gordon himself had telegraphed: "As I have been inconsistent about Zebehr, it is my fault, and I should bear the blame if Zebehr is sent, and should put up with the inconvenience if he is not." He had himself told us that he had provisions for six months, but had after this informed us that provisions were still coming in freely to Khartoum—as late as after March 15th, a week later than the date at which he had told us that he had six months' provisions in the town. I had made up my mind that we must send an expedition, but I did not agree with Baring that it was physically possible to send an expedition at this moment, and thought that if sent at high Nile it would be in time. On the 23rd, after Gordon's defeat, by treachery and shooting, of the two black Pashas, Gordon telegraphed: "I think we are now safe, and that as the Nile rises we shall account for the rebels." This we received on March 31st.

'On March 27th there was a Cabinet without Chamberlain, who was listening to George Russell's speech which I had got him leave to make, and without Mr. Gladstone, who was still ill. The Cabinet decided against an expedition to Khartoum, but the Chancellor' (Lord Selborne) 'gave us to understand that he should resign if one were not sent in the autumn, and Harcourt intimated that he should resign if one were sent. Lord Granville observed that no Cabinet could last a day if it was to be exposed to going to pieces on differences as regards the future. Harcourt proposed to "clear out" of Egypt immediately. Lord Granville won an easy victory over him by proving that only three weeks ago he had wanted to take Egypt under our protection. Harcourt then said that as long ago as November, 1883, he had spoken in favour of clearing out. "Yes," said Lord Granville, "so you did; but I said three weeks ago."

'On March 29th there was a Cabinet at Coombe Warren. Mr. Gladstone seemed pretty well, and had at least one good laugh. He still regretted Zebehr. The Cabinet considered Gordon, what we should do with slavery at Suakim, and House of Commons business.'

About this date the main body of the British troops was withdrawn from Suakim in accordance with the decision of March 25th. They had inflicted defeats on Osman Digna at El Teb, and again at Tamanieb; many Dervishes and not a few English had been killed, but no effect of moment had been produced, and the road to Berber was not opened.

A new complication now arose. Egypt was presented with Europe's total claims for the losses to Europeans in the burnings at Alexandria. They amounted to four millions and a half. How was this demand to be met? Under the Law of Liquidation established in 1880, Egypt could not borrow without the consent of the five Powers who had constituted the Commission of Liquidation. The demand presented to Egypt had to be considered by the one Power which was now *de facto* supreme in Egypt.

'On April 2nd there was an important Cabinet called on Egyptian finance. It began, of course, on something else. We discussed the future of Suakim; the replies to be given in the House on the next day as to Gordon; and then Childers' views upon Egyptian finance; while we were considering these, there came a letter from Northcote with the questions that he intended to put on the next day' (questions which could only be answered by a full statement of policy on all the points of the Egyptian problem). 'After going back to this, we went on again to finance, and decided to call a conference of the Great Powers to alter the Law of Liquidation. Mr. Gladstone had unwillingly consented to meet the Powers by proposing to reduce the charge for the British army; and he was anxious to get the money for the British taxpayer out of a borrowing operation on the future value of the Canal Shares. Chamberlain and I decided that if he did this the Tories would declare that Mr. Gladstone had become a pensioner on the bounty of Lord Beaconsfield. There was some talk at this Cabinet as to whether we should guarantee the Egyptian debt, to which I was opposed. Chamberlain had at one time been friendly to such an operation, but had now "gone round" on the ground that we could not "carry it against the Tories and the Radicals." "Is there anything else?" said Chamberlain to Mr. Gladstone as the Cabinet was breaking up. "No," said Mr. Gladstone, "we have done our Egyptian business and we are an Egyptian Government."'

II.

From this time forward the "Egyptian Government" at Westminster had two main subjects of concern—the question of extricating Gordon with the garrisons, and the question of dealing with the international situation, partly diplomatic and partly financial. France, increasingly unfriendly to Great Britain, was above all unfriendly in regard to Egypt: while Bismarck, doing his best to foment this quarrel, was at the same time weakening Great Britain by menaces in Africa and Australasia, and the danger of a Russian advance in Central Asia hung like a thundercloud over the whole situation.*

There were three groups of opinion in the Government in regard to the Soudan. The first was for an expedition which should carry with it the consequence of occupation more or less prolonged. Another was against any expedition and in favour of immediate evacuation. A third section—including Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Chamberlain—accepted the need of an expedition, but was determined that occupation should not follow. It was incumbent on this last-named group to suggest a positive policy, and Dilke, as will be seen, had his plan ready. There was a further decision to be taken. When once an expedition was in contemplation, the route and the character of the expedition had to be fixed. On this matter also Sir Charles had early formed a resolve, but neither he nor anyone else could pin the Cabinet to a clear course of action.

'At this time' (April 2nd) 'Chamberlain wrote to me of Egypt: "Once more Hartington, and you and I, are at opposite poles. For one, I do not mean to be forced any further in the direction of protectorate."

'Although they would not admit it, the Cabinet were rapidly coming round at this time to an autumn Gordon

* Sir Charles wrote to Mr. Brett on November 15th, 1884: "I told Herbert Bismarck when he was here that it was very silly of his father to get in the way of our Egypt plans, for France would not go to war about them, and therefore, after threatening, he would have to look on and see the things he had threatened against done quietly."

expedition, and Chamberlain wrote to me: "I believe it will come to this in the end"; while Northbrook was in favour of an expedition. I then made up a list from private information showing that six of us were favourable to an expedition, as against five the other way—several members having made no statement either way. Those for an expedition were Hartington, Northbrook, the Chancellor (Lord Selborne), Derby, Chamberlain, and myself; and those against it, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Granville, Harcourt, Kimberley, and Dodson. On April 21st, Egypt was discussed without decision, though with the note by me: "The majority now begin to see that an October expedition is certain."

'On the 23rd a Cabinet . . . considered the possibility of reaching Berber. . . . After the Cabinet of April 23rd, I advocated a naval expedition by the Nile on the ground that the Admiralty were likely to do the thing better than the War Office.* On April 28th, Berber, Khartoum, and Gordon, on which there was nothing new, but Hartington insisted on a large and important military expedition.'

'On April 29th Baring had now come over about Egypt, and attended a Cabinet to state his views. I saw him privately, and settled with him the details for a possible Nile expedition "small and early." The difficulty was at the sixth cataract. He also broached to me his scheme for a new control by the four Powers already represented on the Caisse de la Dette—namely, England, France, Austria, and Italy, with an English president.'

'At the next Cabinet there was a proposal by Hartington that there should be a vote of thanks to Sir Gerald Graham and Admiral Hewett for the Suakim expedition—a proposal which the Cabinet rejected, having had quite enough of votes of thanks on the former occasion when Wolseley and Beauchamp Seymour were in question. The next matter was what we should say about our Law of Liquidation Conference, on which there arose an awkward question as to

* A review by Sir Charles in the *Athenæum* of October 24th, 1908, deals with the *Life of Lord Northbrook*, by Sir Bernard Mallet, and his allusions to Lord Northbrook's consideration, as early as April, of a 'rescue and retire' expedition by the Nile route for the autumn, "it being assumed that the boats then ordered could not pass the various cataracts before High Nile." See *Life of Lord Northbrook*, pp. 185-186.

A review by Sir Charles of March 28th, 1908, in the same paper, of *Modern Egypt*, by the Earl of Cromer, also deals with Lord Northbrook's pressure for a Nile Expedition in March, 1884.

what should happen in the probable case of the representatives of the Powers not being unanimous. There was every reason to suppose that the French would not agree to anything, and precedents went to show that unanimity was necessary to render valid the decisions of a conference. Indeed, there was no precedent as regards questions of principle which told the other way; and at the Congress of Berlin Prince Bismarck had stated, as recorded in the first protocol, that as regarded substantive proposals it was an incontestable principle that the minority should not be bound to acquiesce in a vote of a majority.

'Then came the consideration of the action to be taken by the Egyptian Government towards Mr. O'Kelly, M.P.,* Parnell's friend, who had been trying to join the Mahdi. We next considered Lord Salisbury's relations towards Tewfik as Khedive, as affected by the violent attacks of many Conservative members, put up by Broadley, upon Tewfik's character. Randolph Churchill had made a most ferocious series of attacks upon the Khedive, without one atom of truth in them. It is a curious example of his forgetful flightiness, that when, a few years later, he went to Egypt, he was struck with wonder at the Khedive's refusal to receive him. The terms of the French acceptance of our invitation to the Conference were discussed, as were the House of Commons questions as to Gordon, and the offer of Mr. Guy Dawnay, M.P., to go as a messenger to Gordon at his own cost. Then followed the internal condition of Egypt, as to which Baring's views were stated by me; then Harrar; then the employment of negroes or Turks for the Egyptian army; then the Turks at Suakim; then the Somali coast.

'On the same day I had an interview with the ex-Khedive Ismail, who had gone downhill. He always had a certain difficulty in collecting his ideas and putting them into words, but on this ocasion it went farther than I had previously known. He wished to impress on me the necessity for defending Egypt against the Mahdi at some given point upon the Nile, when occurred that incident of his continually working up to the name of the place and forgetting it.†

'On May 5th there was a Cabinet. We considered the vote of censure as to Gordon, and decided that time must

* Mr. James O'Kelly, then M.P. for Roscommon, a very adventurous war correspondent. He died in 1916.

† See Chapter XXX., Vol. I., p. 487.

be given for it; and I then had some correspondence with Northbrook across the table as to an expedition. I said: "Northbrook, I should be glad to know all you know against the Nile route. Ismail, who knows all about it, thinks it quite possible." Northbrook replied: "My objections are uncertainty of getting steamers up at all (we know nothing of the 140 miles beyond Wady Halfa), and necessity of assistance from natives, which may not be given. Key" (Sir Cooper Key) "is in rather a delicate position, as he does not like to go against Wolseley, whose opinion is for the Nile, and the responsibility is with the W.O."

'On May 7th there was another Cabinet. It was decided that Nubar need not be brought to London for the Conference, that a fresh place in some other unhappy portion of the world must be found for Clifford Lloyd;* and one was found, and he again fought with the local authorities as he had fought in Ireland and in Egypt. With regard to the attitude of France, it was decided that we could not, so long as we remained in Egypt, put up with a new international control. It was decided to bring the Turks to Suakim, although this decision was afterwards reversed. We then wasted much of our time on the consideration of what should be our attitude on the vote of censure which was pending in the House. Harcourt had drawn an amendment for Mr. Gladstone on which they had agreed. Chamberlain and I had agreed to support a mere negative, and we talked the others over. . . .

'On May 11th Fitzmaurice wrote to me complaining that no definite instructions had been given him with regard to the conduct of the Gordon debate' (on the vote of censure),† 'as was usual in such important cases, but stating that he expected me to speak. On the next day, May 12th, I learnt that Hartington had refused to speak, although he was finally made to do so by Mr. Gladstone. On Tuesday, May 13th, I made a good speech from 12.10 to 1.10 a.m.—too late for the reporters. "The debate has (I noted in my diary) been the best I ever heard. Mr. Gladstone was not so good as usual, while Hartington and I were neither better nor worse than usual. But Churchill, Forster, Cowen, John Morley, and Beach, all spoke far above their usual

* A Resident Magistrate who had come violently into collision with the Nationalists in Ireland, and who had also proved himself a storm centre in Egypt, as he afterwards did in Mauritius.

† See *Hansard*, vol. cclxxxviii., 3rd series, debate of May 13th, 1884.

level; and the rest were good. A memorable debate, which I do not expect to see excelled for interest and fire, and I am glad to have had the honour to wind it up for the Liberal party." Afterwards I noted that it "does not read well."

'On May 14th Cabinet again decided that Nubar must not come over for the Conference; discussed internal affairs of Egypt, then the Conference again; and then called in Sir Evelyn Baring and discussed with him the same matters of Clifford Lloyd, Nubar, Conference, the Turks and the Red Sea ports, what was to be said to Waddington about the Conference, and the detail of a scheme of Childers upon Egyptian finance, which was extraordinarily unpopular with the Cabinet.

'On May 17th at noon there was a full Cabinet (Spencer being present), and a long one. The first matter discussed was the Queen and Conference,* and a strong objection on the part of Mr. Gladstone to tell Parliament anything about the Conference. Chamberlain wrote to me on this: "What a queer twist this objection of Mr. G. is!" To which I replied: "I really wish he would have gone to Coombe for this lovely day and let us go on without him. He has wasted an hour and a half. Mr. G. will fight a whole day in Cabinet to avoid telling Parliament something, and then after all will tell them twice as much in reply to Ashmead Bartlett." On this Chamberlain wrote:

> '"Here lies Mr. G., who has left us repining,
> While he is, no doubt, still engaged in refining;
> And explaining distinctions to Peter and Paul,
> Who faintly protest that distinctions so small
> Were never submitted to saints to perplex them,
> Until the Prime Minister came up to vex them."†

'The Cabinet decided to send a telegram to Gordon through Zebehr, in order to obtain safe conveyance for it, offering free use of money among the tribes.

'To Grant Duff I wrote on May 17th: "The Queen is much against our arrangements with France. If we 'let them out' we spoil them, and if we don't we shall be condemned for a 'secret negotiation with France by a moribund Cabinet.' Yet, though we look very wrong, we *are* right." '

'On the 19th it was decided that the Nile was to be patrolled by the Navy as far as Wady Halfa.'

* Proposed Conference of the Powers on the Law of Liquidation.

† These were notes passed during the sitting of the Cabinet. On Mr. Gladstone's inconvenient habit of giving information at question time, see Vol. I., pp. 307, 384, 459, 535; and *infra*, p. 118.

This was in the direction of the military policy which Sir Charles favoured, but in which he was not to succeed. His diplomatic proposals now have to be considered.

'At this time I sent a box round the Cabinet as to the neutralization of Egypt, Northbrook assenting. In a minute dated May 22nd, Lord Northbrook wrote: "I am disposed to think it would be wise to propose at once an international guarantee of the neutrality of Egypt. (*a*) It would give a substance and solidity to the French assurances. (To Grant Duff I wrote on the 22nd: "We have got from France an engagement not to go to Egypt when we come away, and never at any future time, except by the authority of Europe.") (*b*) Without it I hardly see a chance of escaping from annexation. . . . All the circumstances of Egypt . . . point to this solution, and . . . the release of Egypt from the Soudan makes the solution possible." Chamberlain wrote: "I agree entirely with Dilke and Northbrook. (1) As to the intrinsic importance of such a proposal. If adopted it secures every essential British interest, and promises relief from the intolerable burden of a continued occupation. I am strongly in favour of making the proposal at once. It will give a real guarantee to the Powers of our good faith and intention to clear out of the country. (2) I attach great importance to it as forming a definite policy. . . . To make Egypt the 'Belgium of the East' is an object easily popularized. The phrase will carry the proposal." Kimberley wrote: "I agree with Northbrook and Dilke. The neutralization of Egypt will be a gain in itself, irrespective altogether of the question of its internal administration. It would also . . . render it easy to establish a firm domestic Government in so far as it would put an end to the rivalries . . . which exercise a very disturbing influence on all Egyptian affairs.—K." This minute received the support of the signatures of the Chancellor, Harcourt, and Childers. Lord Derby wrote: "I agree so entirely with the views of Lord Northbrook and Sir Charles Dilke that I need add nothing to what they have written. There is only one alternative in the long-run; guaranteed neutrality or annexation.—D., May 23." Carlingford also agreed, but Hartington strongly dissented; and although Lord Granville agreed with us, Hartington's dissent was so fierce that he succeeded in preventing Mr. Gladstone from expressing an opinion, and the view taken by ten members of the Cabinet remained without effect.

'. . . On May 24th, the next matter discussed was the neutralization of Egypt, which Mr. Gladstone decided, in face of Hartington's minute, was "not to be immediately proposed." '*

'We then returned to our old business of Waddington and the Conference. Mr. Gladstone next complained that he had been catechized in the House of Commons on Monday, May 19th, as to whether he "told most lies on Monday or on Thursday." We then discussed the desirability of making a statement in the House as to the number of years that our troops would remain in Egypt; Northbrook and Hartington suggesting either five years or three years from January, 1885, and Carlingford suggesting one year, in which he was supported by the Prime Minister and myself; but three years prevailed. Next came Morocco; and then a Gordon expedition—Mr. Gladstone speaking strongly against it.

'On May 27th there was a Cabinet before the Whitsuntide recess. It was decided what statement was to be made to Parliament about the Conference. Lord Granville had told Waddington that we should not stay more than five years in Egypt at the outside, and Hartington, who himself had been willing to limit our stay to three years, now fought violently against a limitation even to five. Chamberlain wrote to me: "As usual—the question having been twice settled, Hartington, in a minority of one, raises the whole question again. It is direct, unmitigated, and unconcealed obstruction." We then discussed the expedition to Khartoum and the making of a Suakim-Berber railway, but it was decided that orders were not yet to be given. On the next day Mr. Gladstone, who had gone to Hawarden, wrote:

'"My dear Northbrook,

'"I have received and read this morning Sir Cooper Key's very interesting paper on an expedition to Khartoum. I write, however, to suggest that it would be a great advantage if two suggestions it contains were to be fully examined and developed. (1) The *small* river expedition which he thinks practicable. (2) The small desert expedition from Korosko to which he also adverts as an auxiliary method. . . . Clear as is the case for the railway from Suakim, as against the large expedition by the Nile, in

* The offer of neutralization was, however, made. See *infra*, Chapter XXXVIII., pp. 94, 97.

every other view it is attended with the most formidable difficulties of a moral and political kind . . . whether the 'turning of the first sod' of a Soudan railway will not be the substitution for an Egyptian domination there, of an English domination . . . more unnatural, more costly, more destructive, and altogether without foundation in public right. It would be an immense advantage that the expedition (should one be needed) should be one occupying little time, and *leaving no trace behind it.*

'"Yours sincerely,

'"W. E. GLADSTONE."

'Of this letter a copy was made by Edward Hamilton, and enclosed to me with an autograph letter from Mr. Gladstone.

'On May 31st I had received a further letter from Mr. Gladstone about the Soudan expedition, in which he said: "Suakim and Berber route has utterly beaten Nile route for a large expedition. . . . But the question of a small expedition has hardly yet been touched, while some believe Gordon is or will be free, and there need be no expedition at all." I sent this letter to Lord Northbrook, and to Lord Hartington, pointing out that Colonel Sartorius had written a letter to the papers in favour of an expedition of a thousand picked men armed with repeating rifles; and after receiving replies, I wrote to Mr. Gladstone on June 4th that I had not had much encouragement from Hartington and Northbrook, the fact being that Hartington was determined on giving Wolseley his big job.*

'On June 6th Lord Granville called a meeting to ask us whether, Waddington having now agreed to all our demands, we could devise some plan of getting out of them. He said that for his own part he should not have asked the question, but that Hartington had suggested it. . . . He said: "I must rather complain of Hartington's conduct—from so intimate a friend. If it had been Dodson I should have been very angry." After such an introduction, the meeting could hardly come to a conclusion favourable to Hartington's views.

'On June 9th Sir Henry Ponsonby came to see me before the Cabinet, wishing to talk to me before he spoke to any other member, as the Queen thought that I was the most in agreement with her views, which was not the case, as regarded evacuation. He discussed with me

* See *Life of Granville*, vol. ii., p. 395.

two points: First the term of years, as to which I explained that, under the agreement, if at the end of three and a half years any one Power thought we had better stay, and we ourselves wished to stay, then we could stay. It was not my wish that we should. Secondly, as to the union of Bulgaria and East Roumelia, about which I did not care, and as to which I suggested that the Queen should propose to Lord Granville to take counsel with Austria.* At the Cabinet which followed we discussed the words of our promise to lay our French agreements before Parliament, and also our answer as to the Turks and Suakim. The French having written us a disagreeable despatch, we agreed that they must be made to take it back.

'On the next day, June 10th, there was a Cabinet to begin the railway from Suakim, and to consider the draft despatch to Waddington, and as the Government at this time was not very strong, it was decided to leave for our successors a Cabinet minute upon the subject of our relations at this time with France. After the Cabinet I had to see Mr. Gladstone from Lord Granville upon the question whether we should insist on a casting vote on the Caisse. Mr. Gladstone, against the unanimous opinion of the Cabinet, replied: "No, not to the point of breaking off." '

On June 12th Sir Charles made two notes in his Diary of that date:

"I think that if Mr. Gladstone was to stay in, and live on, we should come as regards Egypt to evacuation and neutralization. Under the Tories, or under Hartington, the *status quo* may be tried for a long time."

"When Bismarck offered Egypt to Dizzy, it was in order to embroil England with France."

III.

From this point onwards in the Memoir the focus of the Egyptian question changes; attention is centred on the diplomatic questions arising out of the financial problem.

As between England and France the issue concerned itself with the proposal to pay less than the promised interest on previously existing loans. The French view,

* The union took place in 1885.

expressed through M. Barrère, the French agent in Egypt, was that interest need not be reduced; the alternative view was that the bondholders must make a sacrifice of part of their interest, at any rate for some period of years, in return for the better security they were obtaining.

'On July 3rd Barrère called and explained to me a scheme of his on Egyptian finance, in which he was now highly skilled, having been French Agent in Egypt for some time. I put the matter before Lord Granville, who sent it to Mr. Gladstone and Childers. Barrère argued that it was not necessary to reduce interest, or, to use the slang of the moment, to "cut the coupon." We called a meeting of the Commons Ministers, and Chamberlain announced that he should resign if the coupon were not cut.

'*July 18th*, 1884.—We had virtually decided on declaring Egypt bankrupt in order to force the hands of the French, but Waddington, at a meeting with Childers, had broached a plan, which had originally been suggested by the Germans, for a temporary reduction of interest, to be reconsidered at the end of a certain number of years.' (These proposals were discussed at the Conference, which met in the latter half of July, held seven sittings, and then broke down without arriving at a conclusion on August 1st.) 'The question now raised was—at the end of what number of years? The French said three, and we decided to propose ten; but with a willingness to take six or even five; we advancing $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions instead of 8, or, in other words, leaving out the indemnities due by Egypt. If this arrangement failed, then we were to fall back on bankruptcy. Harcourt was much against declaring bankruptcy, and in favour of the policy of "scuttle." Hartington was against bankruptcy, and for paying the differences ourselves; so as to force us into annexation. Spencer, Childers, Chamberlain, and I, were for bankruptcy or for a strong threat of bankruptcy.

'On July 21st there was a meeting of members of the Cabinet after questions, at which Mr. Gladstone, Lord Granville, Hartington, Harcourt, Childers, and I, were present. The French had backed out of their proposals, and we considered a new scheme of Childers's to put all administrative charges in Egypt before interest of debt, a scheme which it was certain that the French would refuse. Harcourt was again violent against bankruptcy, which he announced he thought grossly "illegal," as if there were such a thing as illegality in such affairs.

'On August 2nd there was a full Cabinet, every member being present, and we had to consider whether, the Conference having broken down, Baring should go back to Egypt or remain at the Foreign Office and continue to advise us. Lord Granville proposed that he should remain, and that Malet should go to Egypt. Chamberlain proposed that Goschen should go. Childers proposed J. K. Cross.* Dufferin was mentioned; then Lord Granville proposed Northbrook. All other names were immediately withdrawn, and Northbrook took time to consider, but evidently meant to go, and decided, I think, in the course of the same evening. Baring was then called in, and we once more began to chop straw by considering the "ulterior consequences" of the collapse of the Conference—*i.e.*, bankruptcy. Lastly, Gordon was dealt with, and it was decided that a supplementary estimate should be proposed, with the understanding that we should spend more if it was wanted. I wrote to Chamberlain: "We always have two subjects—(*a*) Conference, (*b*) Gordon." And he wrote back: "The first always taking up two or three hours, and the second five minutes at the fag end of business."

'On August 3rd I noted "we are going to send Northbrook to Egypt to put down Barrère."

'On August 5th we considered the instructions to Northbrook, or rather whether he should have any at all, and if so, what they should be. Northbrook read us a scheme which he had written, which attempted to conciliate Turkey and Italy, so as to have great naval strength in the Mediterranean and to prevent all chance of a sudden occupation of Egypt by France. We were to express our continued determination not to annex. We were to stay five years at the request of the Sultan. We were again to propose to the Powers those arrangements with regard to the Canal which we had proposed already. We were to pay the indemnities in stock; and the next coupon in full; and we were to promise for the future not less than 4 per cent. on privileged stocks, and not less than 3 per cent. on the Unified debt, while we were in Egypt. Indian troops were to hold Massowah. Harcourt, in reply, read a written counter-statement, again proposing to "scuttle," and again threatening us that we should have war with France. Hartington again spoke for a guarantee by us of the whole Egyptian debt. After Hartington's observations the discussion was, as usual, adjourned. Chamberlain and I de-

* Under-Secretary for India.

cided that we would ask for our old term of three and a half years' occupation, as against Northbrook's five. Next came Gordon, and Hartington proposed that we should embody some militia.

'On August 6th there was another Cabinet, and the first question was that of Northbrook's scheme. Lord Granville agreed to a temporary use of Turkish troops provided that they were to leave Egypt when we left. Chamberlain would not agree, and wished to stick to Northbrook's phrase only inviting "co-operation." This view prevailed, and it was decided that if the Turks proposed to send a commissioner, we were to refuse. But the question of troops was really left open for more discussion. Next came the question of an advance of nearly a million which had been made by Rothschild to Egypt, and we asked him, as a favour to ourselves, to let it run, which was all he wanted us to do. Northbrook, who is not strong, had been a good deal fatigued with the discussion on his scheme, and instead of sleeping (his usual practice at a Cabinet) on this occasion fainted, and we had to get up and look after him at this point.

'On August 26th I received a letter from Hartington, saying that Northbrook was going to Osborne at the end of the week, and starting for Egypt from there. Hartington told me he was coming up to meet him, and he afterwards wrote to me to fix an appointment at the War Office on the 29th. This I kept. Northbrook was deplorably weak. He had returned from Rosebery's completely under the influence of Mr. Gladstone's pro-French views.* He had settled to spend a day at Walmer, and had telegraphed to Lord Lyons to meet him there. His plan now was to ask the French Government to send a man to Egypt in order that he and the Frenchman might settle matters together. Hartington and I pointed out to him that the Frenchman's instructions from his Government must either be to refuse all reduction of interest, or to consent to it upon obtaining from us a better political position than that given to France by the Anglo-French agreement. We explained to him that it would be impossible for us to tolerate such proposals. I wrote to Chamberlain a full account of the interview.

'*September 22nd.*—We decided with reference to Egyptian finance that Chamberlain should write a strong letter to Lord Granville protesting against any British advance to

* At Dalmeny Lord Northbrook "met Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone." See *Life of Lord Northbrook*, p. 190.

Egypt, unless accompanied by a cutting of the coupon. He did so, and on September 25th sent me a copy, and I sent the copy to Childers, and wrote myself to Lord Granville. On the 27th I received a memorandum from Chamberlain as to Lord Granville, Lord Derby, and Bismarck.

'Chamberlain's memorandum was a fierce denunciation of the principles laid down in Northbrook's despatch No. 4, dated September 13th, and received September 22nd.'*

Controversy now raged over Lord Northbrook's scheme, and added to the difficulties of the Cabinet, which was divided on the question of lowering or not lowering the rate of interest.

'On 19th November the second matter mentioned was Northbrook's scheme, against which I fought hard. . . . I pointed out that early in April, when Mr. Gladstone had wished to borrow on the future value of the Canal shares, that proposal had not been accepted, and we laid down the principle that it was for the bondholders to make sacrifices. On July 3rd we had decided that the coupon must be "cut." On July 18th the whole Cabinet had taken the same view except Harcourt and the Chancellor, and four members—Childers, Spencer, Chamberlain, and I—had advocated distinct bankruptcy. On August 2nd we had seen Baring to lay our plans for bankruptcy. On August 5th Northbrook himself had proposed a reduction of the interest. On August 29th there had been a general agreement to the same effect. Northbrook's policy had enormously sent up Egyptian stocks. After my strong observations the opinions stood: Mr. Gladstone, Childers, Chamberlain, Harcourt, Trevelyan, and Dilke against Northbrook's scheme; for it, Lord Granville, the Chancellor, Hartington, Spencer, Kimberley, Derby, Carlingford, and Northbrook himself. All the Lords on one side, curiously enough, and all the Sirs and Mr.'s on the other; eight to six against us. But I noted: "Mr. Gladstone is so strong that we shall win." "As we did."†

* Lord Northbrook had arrived in Egypt.

† Letter from Sir Charles to Mr. Brett (afterwards Lord Esher):

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD,
WHITEHALL,
November 19th, 1884.

"*My* policy has always been bankruptcy and stand the shot, and if we had stuck to that we should have had no trouble with the Powers; but indiscretions have made that difficult. It is not pleasant to be called in too late. I quite agree in your general view, but how can the bondholder be got to make sacrifices without his consent?"

'At the meeting of the Cabinet of December 2nd, Egyptian finance again came up. We were informed that Prince Bismarck suggested oral communications among ambassadors. For this Malet proposed Paris, and we replied Berlin.'

IV.

During this time the Government continued to waver as to the Soudan expedition.

On June 21st

'with regard to Gordon it was decided to wait ten days before settling anything, and to see whether we heard from him in reply to the silly questions which had been asked.'

On June 27th came the definitive news that Berber had fallen on May 26th. On July 5th

'We discussed the Egyptian army of the future, and then the question of whether we should send an expedition to Khartoum, as to which we again could come to no decision; Mr. Gladstone still opposing.'

Dilke, backed by Chamberlain, was still pressing the military solution which he favoured. On July 16th

'Hartington on this occasion gave up the Berber-Suakim route, and pressed for a decision as to an immediate expedition by the Nile. He was supported by the Chancellor, Northbrook, Carlingford, and Dodson. Mr. Gladstone, Harcourt, and Childers opposed.

'Chamberlain and I opposed a large expedition by the Nile, and supported a small expedition, under the control of the navy, with a body of picked men. Baring was called in about the police in Egypt, and his views in support of Nubar were approved. Nubar was to have his own way in the appointment of Inspectors of Police in Egypt.'

On July 22nd we found that Mr. Gladstone had again taken up Zebehr, and was anxious to send him to Khartoum in order to avoid a British expedition.

'On July 25th there was a full Cabinet, Spencer being present, which first discussed the Conference and then the Gordon expedition, for which for the first time a large

majority of the Cabinet pronounced. The issue was narrowed down to that of sending some sort of British force to or towards Dongola; and this was supported by Hartington, the Chancellor, Derby, Northbrook, Spencer, Carlingford, Dodson, Chamberlain, and me, while on the other side were only Mr. Gladstone, Harcourt, and Kimberley. Lord Granville said nothing. By the stoutness of their resistance the three for the moment prevailed over the nine.

'On July 31st a storm was brewing about Gordon, and Harcourt went about declaring that the Government would break up upon the question. On the next day, August 1st, a way out of the difficulty was found in an agreement that we should ask for a small vote of credit, which we were to use or not as should be thought right later.'

It must be remembered that communications with Gordon were now interrupted, though occasionally renewed, and this added to the confusion.

'On September 17th we received a telegram from Gordon which looked as though he were perfectly mad, although some of the other telegrams from him sent at the same time were sane enough.'

Since Parliament had risen and the Cabinet scattered, preparations had been going on apace.

'When Hartington came to me on September 15th he told me that he had already spent "£750,000 out of the £300,000" for the Gordon expedition.'*

'On October 4th Chamberlain had written strongly against Wolseley's great expedition, Harcourt was still opposing the whole thing. After this meeting of the Cabinet Northbrook wrote to Gordon a long letter based on the Cabinet decision. He stated that the expedition under Wolseley was not sent for the purpose of defeating the Mahdi, but only of enabling the Egyptian garrison of Khartoum, the civil employés and their families, with Gordon, to return to Egypt. He offered the Grand Cross of the Bath' (to Gordon) 'as from the Queen personally. He explained our refusal of Zebehr, and he suggested the

* On August 9th Lord Hartington 'again asked us for permission to embody militia or call out a portion of the First-Class Army Reserve.'

placing at Khartoum of the Mudir of Dongola. It was easy, however, to write to Gordon, but it was not easy to get the letters to him; and we had to attempt even to send them by Tripoli and the desert.'*

That is the last detailed reference to Gordon in the Memoir until February 5th, 1885, when the news of the fall of Khartoum reached London. The matter had passed out of the hands of the Cabinet into those of the soldiers.

This comment in the Diary may fitly end this chapter:

'On February 20th I noted (conversation, I think, not printed), Lord Acton says of Gladstone: "Cannot make up my mind whether he is not wholly unconscious when working himself up to a change of position. After watching him do it, I think that he is so. He lives completely in what for the moment he chooses to believe." '

* As to the last communications with Gordon, see *Life of Granville*, vol. ii., pp. 397-399. Besides the authorities already quoted, the Parliamentary Papers Nos. 2, 6, 12, 13, and 25, for 1884, may be referred to.

CHAPTER XXXVI

FRANCHISE AND REDISTRIBUTION

July to December, 1884.

In the summer of 1884 the Government Bill for extension of the franchise had strong and even passionate support throughout the country; but that policy threatened a breach with Lord Hartington, who in the opinion of many was by prescriptive right Mr. Gladstone's successor. Still more entangling were the difficulties in respect of Egypt, over which the Government was so hopelessly divided that no coherent policy could be pursued. Sir Charles notes that on July 18th Mr. Gladstone,

'who had the greatest abhorrence for City dinners, proposed the extinction of the Lord Mayor's ministerial banquet; the fact being that the Government of London Bill and the failure to send an expedition to Khartoum had made the Ministry so unpopular in the City that he did not think it wise to subject himself to the torture which such banquets are to him.'

"The Tory game," Sir Charles wrote on May 24th, 1884, to his agent, "is to delay the franchise until they have upset us upon Egypt, before the Franchise Bill has reached the Lords."*

When the Franchise Bill went up to the Lords in the first week of July, it was rejected for a reasoned amendment which declined to alter the franchise except as part of a scheme dealing with redistribution of seats.

'On July 5th there was a Cabinet to consider what was called the crisis—our relations with the House of Lords

* This letter is also quoted in Chapter XXXIV., p. 6.

over the franchise, and Spencer was present. . . . The question to be considered was that of dissolution or an autumn Session. Lord Granville, Hartington, and Lord Derby were for an immediate dissolution on the old franchise, which was at once negatived.'

'On June 21st there was mentioned the attitude of the House of Lords. Lord Granville said something in favour of life peerages. I asked Chamberlain whether he thought that it was seriously meant, and writing passed between us in which he replied: "Serious, I think"; to which I answered: "You won't have it, will you?" Answer: "No."'

'On July 7th Mr. Gladstone explained to me his plan for dealing with the House of Lords, which was not so objectionable to me as the schemes known as "Reform of the House of Lords." It was to imitate the French constitution, and in cases of difference to make the two Houses sit in Congress and vote together. From the practical point of view it would be as difficult to carry as the abolition of the House of Lords, and if carried would not be of much use to the Liberal party except on occasions when their majority was absolutely overwhelming.

'On July 8th offers of compromise came to us from the Lords, but they would not offer terms which we could accept. We decided to propose to them a solemn resolution by both Houses pledging us to redistribution. This they refused.'

The extent of real agreement which existed between the two sides had not yet been divined; and it was Sir Charles who set on foot the work which finally averted conflict.

'Early in July I began to take time by the forelock by preparing, without instructions from the Cabinet, a Redistribution scheme; and the first memoranda drawn up by Sir John Lambert for my use were written in that month, although it was not till after Parliament had separated for the recess that we got seriously to work. In the evening of July 14th Mr. Gladstone broached to me his views on Redistribution, and we practically hatched the Bill.'

Party feeling ran high, and the Queen intervened.

'On July 9th in the morning Sir Henry Ponsonby came up to see the Duke of Richmond and some of us, and tried to settle the deadlock, but failed. . . . The Cabinet decided

that Chamberlain must not take the chair at a meeting at the Agricultural Hall to denounce the House of Lords.'

Liberals in general were, however, speaking out, and at a Cabinet a week later they had 'some fun with Hartington concerning his Lancashire meetings, with strong resolutions directed against the House of Lords for doing that which he privately approved.' Also, there was a tremendous demonstration in the Metropolis.

'On July 21st I saw the Franchise Demonstration on this day from the Speaker's window, the procession passing from three till six.'

'After the Cabinet on August 5th we congratulated Chamberlain upon his Birmingham franchise meeting, and he told us that Birmingham was "thirsting for the blood of the Lords—saying to Bright: 'You are too lenient with them. We won't stand them any longer.'" I told him that as the *Times* had said that he was too violent, I had no doubt the Queen would say so also, to which he replied: "Probably, and if she does I shall most likely . . . deny her right to criticise my speeches, although she may, if she likes, dismiss me, in which case I will lead an agitation against the Lords in the country." I answered: "Yes, but you cannot go alone in such a case, and therefore should not appear to contemplate doing so." He replied: "I am not going, but perhaps she can dismiss me. What then? I am not going to tie my tongue." I retorted: "In that case it would surely be even more essential than usual that I should go too." He closed the matter by saying: "If it really arose out of the agitation against the Lords and the interference of the Crown with the liberty of speech of ministers, I do not see how a Radical could stay in. Remember, I have observed Mr. Gladstone's limits. I have said nothing about the future; only denounced past action."'

Mr. Chamberlain's outside agitation coincided with Sir Charles's work towards a peaceful solution. On August 9th

'A Committee of the Cabinet was appointed to deal with Redistribution—to consist of Hartington, Kimberley, Childers, Chamberlain, and me, with the addition of Lefevre.

They forgot James, who was anxious to be on it,* but I soon got rid of the Committee and went on by myself with Lambert.'

Parliament was prorogued on August 14th, but very soon compromise was in the air.

'On August 21st and 22nd I had interviews with Hartington at his wish, nominally to talk over the sending of Wolseley to Egypt, but really to see what I thought of a compromise with the Lords on the basis of Lord Cowper's letter in the *Times*—introduction of the Redistribution Bill in October.'

The situation was profoundly modified by speeches from Lord Salisbury, which made it clear that the plan "hatched" between Mr. Gladstone and Sir Charles was not likely to have any terrors for him. Lord Kimberley wrote in September:

"Now that Salisbury is going in for electoral districts, it will become a sort of open competition which party can go furthest. I should not be surprised if he were to trump us by proposing to abolish the House of Lords."

'I had now decided to agree with Lord Salisbury in advance, and divide the counties into single-member districts if Mr. Gladstone would let me; and Trevelyan, to whom I had broached my scheme, wrote: "I very much approve of the scheme of dividing counties. I hope to goodness you will be able to carry it out."'

The original draft, completed on September 18th, followed the lines laid down in consultation with Mr. Gladstone. The object of obtaining fair representation, and doing away with over-representation of vested interests, was thus attacked and began with two great industrial centres.

The scheme for England treated Lancashire and Yorkshire as urban throughout, and divided them into single-member districts; but the remaining "rural" counties of England were divided into two-member districts. Thus, 'the net increase of county members was 53.' Boroughs

* Sir Charles wrote to Sir Henry James on the matter, and received a reply admitting that he had been "slightly touched" by the omission of his name, but saying that he would still give his services.

which had less than 10,000 inhabitants (53 in all) were merged into the counties; those with a population of between 10,000 and under 40,000, which had two members, lost one. Thus, having added to the under-represented, Sir Charles took from the over-represented, and adds: 'this gave us 33 more seats.' Sir Charles in a secret memorandum added that he thought the fixing of so low a limit as 10,000 showed 'an altogether indefensible tenderness to vested interests.' "I should carry the loss of one member far higher than the 40,000 line adopted, and should take away one member up to the point at which I began to give two" to a new constituency. Dilke was in favour of carrying merger of small boroughs to a greater extent than was adopted in the Act.

"Summing up, on our English borough scheme," he said, "I am struck by its *extreme* timidity. I do not see how it is to stand the revolutionary criticism of Lord Salisbury." 'My plan for the Metropolis gave to it its legitimate proportion of members: 55 in all. . . . These figures should be compared with 22—the previous number.'

As to Ireland, he admitted that 'if you take its population as a whole it was over-represented in our plan; yet the difference in favour of Ireland is very small; moreover, Wales is vastly better treated than Ireland.' Lord Spencer 'thought there would be a howl from Belfast,' and wished for the representation of minorities. 'But the Irish Government made no practical proposal,' and the whole of this intricate business was left almost entirely to Sir Charles.

'On September 29th Mr. Gladstone wrote at length conveying his general approval of my plan, and stating that he did not intend to "handle" the Bill in the House of Commons; and so wished to defer to the opinions of his colleagues. He gave me leave to add 12 members to the House for Scotland, instead of taking the 12 from England; and he congratulated me upon the "wonderful progress" which I had made. . . . On the same day on which I had received Mr. Gladstone's letter I saw one from Sir Henry Ponsonby to Mr. Gladstone with Mr. Gladstone's reply. Sir Henry Ponsonby made proposals. . . . Mr. Gladstone had refused

both for the present; the former with scorn and the latter with argument.*

'On September 30th further letters were circulated, one from Sir Henry Ponsonby on the 27th, in which he said that the reform of the House of Lords must in any case come, but must come later, and that he would see the leaders of the Opposition about the second suggestion of his previous letter as it had not been absolutely refused (the suggestion being that the Lords should provide in the Franchise Bill that it should come into force on January 1st, 1886, unless the Redistribution Bill were sooner passed).

'On October 4th Hartington made a speech which produced a storm upon this subject of Compromise as to Reform.' (He proposed that the Lords should pass the Franchise Bill "after seeing the conditions of the Redistribution Bill and satisfying themselves that they were fair.") 'But Mr. Gladstone went with Chamberlain and myself against any compromise.'

Mr. Chamberlain put the point that no bargain could be considered unless the Franchise Bill were first passed without conditions very plainly in a speech on October 7th, and next day at the Cabinet

'Mr. Gladstone expressed his approval of Chamberlain's speech of the previous night, and attacked Hartington for his earlier one. It seemed to me that at this moment Lord Salisbury might have caught Hartington by offering the compromise which Hartington had suggested. . . . I refused to discuss Redistribution with the Cabinet, telling Chamberlain that they would "drive me wild with little peddling points."'

The appreciation of Sir Charles's competence was general. It was not limited to Parliament, and he met the expression of it when he appeared on the platform in three great centres of the Lancashire industrial democracy.

'On Tuesday, October 14th, I spoke at Oldham, and on October 15th at the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, and on the 16th at Stockport. I had a wonderful reception at all these meetings, but especially at the Manchester meeting.'

* The first was "that the Lords should read the Franchise Bill a second time, and then pass a resolution declaring that they would go into Committee as soon as the Redistribution Bill reached them."

Sir Charles's personal record served the party well, for the Tory cry was that the Liberals wished to preserve the inequalities of the existing divisions. To this he answered by appealing to the projects which he had introduced year after year, and recalling their reception from the Tory Government:

"I have preached for redistribution in the desert, I have advocated it unceasingly for years, I have been a bore upon it in Parliament and out; even the franchise is no less important in my eyes as being that which I have a dozen times called 'the necessary first step to a complete redistribution' than in and for itself. Redistribution is, however, if possible, of even more tremendous difficulty than importance. It offers a greater hold than any other subject to the arts of blocking and delay."*

'On October 17th Spencer reported from Balmoral that the Queen was much pleased with her "Speech"; but not so with other people's speeches, being angry at the violence of the language used.'

Lord Salisbury had declared that if Birmingham was going to march on London, he hoped Mr. Chamberlain would head the procession and get his head broken for his pains. Mr. Chamberlain retorted that he would gladly head the procession if Lord Salisbury would promise to come and meet it, and then, if his own head were broken, "it should be broken in very good company." On October 21st

'I was sent for by Mr. Gladstone about Chamberlain's speech, and wrote to Chamberlain to ask him if he could tone it down a little. . . . On October 22nd at the Cabinet Chamberlain told me that he was willing to adopt the words of my letter in explanation of his speech.'

He agreed to write for publication a letter to one of his Quaker constituents; but it was judged insufficient.

'On October 28th Mr. Gladstone wrote to me: "I thought you and I were perfectly agreed about the unfortunate expressions in Chamberlain's speech . . . and in the expectation that his letter . . . would fully meet the case. I own that in my opinion it did not come up to the mark. All I had really wished was a note conceived in the same spirit

* October 14th, at Oldham.

as that in which he withdrew the 'jackal,' because it gave offence. Can nothing more be done? You saw a recent letter of mine in defence, written when I thought the objections taken not to be just. I am precluded from writing any such letter with the facts as they now stand, but I hope that you may be able to bring them to the standard of our reasonable expectations." I sent this letter to Chamberlain, as was intended, with a note from me to say that it was clear that the Queen had written Mr. Gladstone a second letter about the matter, and asked whether I should say that I thought Chamberlain's letter met the case; and Chamberlain replied: "Yes. I cannot and *will not* do more." This I communicated to Mr. Gladstone. Randolph Churchill had taken the matter up. He accused Chamberlain of having advocated violence, and was loudly threatening, even to me, that there should be "somebody killed at Birmingham next time." Chamberlain told me that Randolph had tried to get up a march against Highbury on the part of the Birmingham Tory roughs; but they were still on speaking terms, and often chatting together at the smoking-room at the House. On the same day, the 28th, late in the evening Mr. Gladstone sent for me about the Chamberlain matter, and said of the Queen: "She not only attacks him but me through him, and says I pay a great deal too much attention to him." When Chamberlain and I went home, as we almost always did, together in one cab, he broke out, evidently much worried and excited, against Mr. Gladstone.

'Next day I warned Mr. Gladstone that it would not take much to make a serious row.'

On October 15th Sir Charles wrote to Sir M. Grant Duff that he expected 'they would sit till February, and send the Bill up a third time.' On October 24th Mr. Gladstone was inclined to resign at the second rejection, which was taken for a certainty. But as to the final issue, it was becoming daily clearer that the Commons were going to win against the Lords. Even in the home counties Liberalism had become aggressive.

'*October 24th.*—Franchise and Redistribution seemed well in view when I discovered on this day that Nathaniel Rothschild, who had lately looked on Buckinghamshire as his own, was now down on his knees to Carrington about it.'

Work now began on the details of the draft Bill.

'On October 25th there was a full meeting of my Committee of the Cabinet on Redistribution. I took the chair, and Hartington, Kimberley, Childers, Chamberlain, James, and Lefevre, sat round the table. I got my own way in everything, and succeeded in raising the 10,000 limit of merger to 15,000. Mr. Gladstone, who disliked the change, and who was the strongest Conservative living upon the subject, yielded to it on the same night by letter.'

Sir Charles now threw himself into getting as big a measure as possible by a 'truce of God' between the parties.

'On October 29th Mr. Gladstone told me that Lord Carnarvon had proposed to him that they should meet in order to come to some conclusion about Redistribution. He had declined, but had tried, through Sir Erskine May, to induce the Tories to appoint a Committee of their own to draw up a scheme. I saw Sir Erskine May and told him to tell Northcote that I would accept, and press the acceptance of, any scheme not obviously unfair, and not containing minority representation, which I should be unable to carry.'

'On October 31st there was a Cabinet which was Trevelyan's first, and very glad he and his wife were to escape from Ireland,* which had aged him dreadfully. . . . On the question of Reform Hartington told us that he had had several interviews with Sir Michael Beach, who had expressly stated that he was not authorized by his party to make suggestions, but had proposed total merger up to 25,000, and loss of the second seat up to 80,000. I, to clinch the matter, at once volunteered to draw up a scheme on this basis.'

'James called my attention to some communications in the Conservative newspapers, stating that he had it on very high authority (which with James always meant Randolph Churchill) that the extremely large schemes hinted at were Lord Salisbury's, and would be supported by the whole Conservative party; but these schemes suggested minority-representation in urban districts, with single-member constituencies in counties; or, as Chamberlain said, "Tory

* The Chief Secretaryship was offered to Mr. Shaw Lefevre, who refused on the same ground as had previously been taken by Sir Charles. Without Cabinet rank he was not prepared to accept it. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was then appointed. Mr. Lefevre entered the Cabinet as Postmaster-General after the death of Mr. Fawcett, which occurred on November 6th, 1884.

minority represented in towns, and Liberal minority extinguished in county." Lord Salisbury, however, was only keeping his friends in good humour with minority-representation. In the evening Randolph Churchill sent me a message that he wished to have a conference with me about Redistribution, and by an arrangement made through Sir Erskine May, we met in the Office of the Serjeant-at-Arms. He then told me that Beach's scheme was his, and that he was convinced that an agreement might be come to on those lines. I assured him of my warm support for a large scheme. I think this was the occasion (about this time) when Randolph, who was thinking of going to India, vented his anger as to Salisbury. Winston Churchill told me in March, 1901, that his father had come to terms with Salisbury as to the future Tory Government before he started for India. I told him this could not be, as the possibility of forming one depended on the Irish, and that Lord Salisbury could not at this early date have agreed to buy them by the promises of (*a*) Enquiry into Spencer's police, (*b*) no Coercion, (*c*) a Viceroy personally favourable to Home Rule.

'In the evening I dined with the Duchess of Manchester to meet the Dufferins, on which occasion Dufferin shone, but his health and spirits were now beginning to decline. Hartington was at the dinner, and told me that he had had a fresh interview with Beach, this time at his (Hartington's) request.

'On Saturday, November 1st, I had some correspondence with Hartington about these interviews, of which I warmly approved; and on the 3rd Hartington wrote to me that he was going to see Beach again that day, and I placed all my scheme before him for communication to the Conservative front bench.'

Publicly there was war.

'On November 4th was the laying of the foundation-stone of the National Liberal Club, at which Harcourt, after saying that he was a moderate politician, compared the House of Lords to Sodom and Gomorrah.'

But privately

'on this day Hartington again saw Beach, and afterwards Churchill. . . . Beach said that Lord Salisbury unreservedly accepted the Queen's suggestion for a meeting of the leaders. . . . Conferences went on, but all through the month

Beach declined to take a "representative character, or negotiate in such a way as would commit his party"—to use Hartington's words. Hartington now thought "Mr. Gladstone would be able either to come to terms with Lord Salisbury or to put him completely in the wrong." Hartington added: "Beach very much regrets the Lowther and John Manners speeches,"'

and probably Lord Hartington expressed regret for Sir William Harcourt's references to Sodom and Gomorrah.

'On the 6th there was a meeting of my Committee on Redistribution to consider Beach's proposals, at which I took the chair, but did little else, and left all the talking to the others, and their view came to this—that they were quite willing to agree to the Tory revolutionary scheme, provided the Tories would take the odium with the House of Commons of proposing it.'

'On November 7th the Cabinet decided that I should be joined to Hartington as recognized plenipotentiary.'

On the 10th

'I proposed and Mr. Gladstone agreed to write to Lord Salisbury "distinctly accepting the Queen's offers." On November 11th we confirmed our decisions at the last Cabinet as to completely taking away from Lord Salisbury the power of saying that he had accepted and we declined the Queen's proposals, by unreservedly supporting Mr. Gladstone's letter to the Queen.'

On November 15th Mr. Gladstone informed the Cabinet that the Lords were unyielding.

'Northcote had taken tea with him on the previous evening. The Lords would not part with the Franchise Bill till the Redistribution Bill was in their House. As regarded Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Gladstone considered the door absolutely closed, but he was informed that the Duke of Richmond and Lord Cairns did not agree with the leaders. We then drew up a statement to be made on Monday, November 17th, in both Houses of Parliament as to the steps we had taken to produce conciliation, Harcourt saying: "This is the apple-woman spitting on her old apples and shining 'em up!"—the fact being that it was only done to put the Lords in the wrong.'

'On Monday, November 17th, when I returned from Sandringham, I had to see Lord Rowton, who had been sent to me by the Prince of Wales to try and produce a settlement of the Redistribution difficulty, but we only sat and smiled at one another; he saying that he had come because he had been told to come, and I saying that I had nothing new to tell him, for Lord Salisbury knew all we had to say.'

'On November 19th there was a Cabinet. The first matter mentioned was the arrangement with the Conservatives for an interview, and at four o'clock on this day, November 19th, occurred the first meeting of the parties: an interview between Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote on the one side, and Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville on the other. Lord Salisbury had written to me about it already, and had privately seen my papers the previous day at the Commission, and had asked me a great number of questions, and I had given him my division of the Metropolis and of Lancashire at his wish, and received from him the following note: "I do not know whether it will be possible to discuss the application of the one-member principle to the Counties and the Metropolitan Constituencies and the suburbs of the larger towns." The hesitating way in which he asked shows that we might have avoided the single-members had we fought upon the point. But, as I liked them myself, I fought the other way, against Mr. Gladstone. At the interview between the leaders of the two parties and the two Houses it was merely decided that the real interview should take place on Saturday, November 22nd, at noon between the two Conservative chiefs and Mr. Gladstone, Lord Hartington, and me, Lord Granville being left out as knowing nothing of the subject. On November 21st I continued my private conference with Lord Salisbury at the Royal Commission, and we settled who the Boundary Commissioners should be. On Saturday, November 22nd, I had a conference with Chamberlain before going to the meeting with Lord Salisbury. Chamberlain was in favour of two-member seats as against single members, especially for boroughs. He was as clear as was Lord Salisbury that the single-member system would damage the Liberal party in the Metropolis.

'In the afternoon the Conference took place, and there never was so friendly and pleasant a meeting. I fully described it in three letters to Chamberlain, in which I said, among other things: "It looks as though Lord Salisbury is

really anxious that we should pass our Bill." No memorandum on this day passed in writing, and the written compact was concluded between Lord Salisbury and me only on November 28th. The meeting of the 22nd was known at the time as the Downing Street meeting; and the other as "the Arlington Street compact."

'On Sunday, November 23rd, Lord Salisbury wrote to me a letter which I sent on to Mr. Gladstone and which he kept. Mr. Gladstone replied on the same day undertaking to move the adjournment of the House for a week, and showing that he was not at all sure that Lord Salisbury, having got from us the whole of our scheme and given us nothing in writing which was worth anything, did not mean to sell us. Chamberlain wrote on the same day in reply to my letters, "I cannot make head or tail of Salisbury. He appears to be swallowing every word that he has ever written or spoken about Redistribution. . . . I wonder if he will carry his party with him. . . . On the whole, you seem to be doing very well." '

Discussion now went on by correspondence between Sir Charles and Lord Salisbury, and it touched subjects which might easily have led to friction. Lord Salisbury proposed to create a number of urban constituencies by grouping his plan being to get the small towns taken out of rural districts which he looked upon as otherwise Conservative, and to group them with small manufacturing boroughs:

'I was aghast at this suggestion, because it was a very difficult thing, in a Parliamentary sense, to create a few such groups in England; and if the thing was to be carried far and not confined to a few cases only it would entirely have destroyed the whole of the work that we had done, because all the counties would have had their numbers altered. I therefore fought stoutly for my own scheme, which I succeeded in carrying almost untouched. Lord Salisbury's letter crossed one from me to him in which, after Mr. Gladstone's leave (conveyed in the words "I see no objection to sending him this excellent and succinct paper marked Secret"), I had communicated to Lord Salisbury my views and the grounds on which they were based.'

'On the 26th, at four o'clock, we met at Downing Street, all five being present. . . . Lord Salisbury, yielding to my reasoning, gave up grouping,' on the understanding that the Boundary Commissioners were 'to keep the urban patches

as far as possible by themselves. . . . Ultimately it was settled that single-member districts should be universal in counties, and that we should leave open for the present the question of how far it should be applied to boroughs.'

Lord Salisbury wished to retain the minority clause in places where he thought it had worked well, but he did not ask for it in Birmingham and Glasgow. 'All this showed great indecision,' says Sir Charles, and he observes that 'Lord Salisbury did not seem to me thoroughly to understand his subject.' It is probable, at all events, that he was no match on the details either for Sir Charles or for Mr. Gladstone, who, after the Conference, thus summed up his impressions in a letter dated November 26th:

"MY DEAR DILKE,

"I send you herewith for your consideration a first sketch which I have made of a possible communication to-morrow after the Cabinet from us to the Legates of the opposite party. I think that if the Cabinet make it an *ultimatum* we should be safe with it. There was a careful abstention to-day on their side from anything beyond praising this or that, and at the outset they spoke of the one-member system for boroughs 'with exceptions' as what they desired.

"Yours sincerely,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

'Mr. Gladstone's memorandum was on my lines. On the next morning, November 27th, Mr. Gladstone, Lord Granville, Hartington, I, and Chamberlain met before the Cabinet at 11 o'clock, and kept the Cabinet waiting, the Cabinet having been called for twelve, and Redistribution alone being considered at it. I announced at the Cabinet that the Tories proposed and we accepted single-member districts universally in counties, boundaries to be drawn by a commission who were to separate urban from rural as far as possible, without grouping and without creating constituencies of utterly eccentric shape. The names of the commissioners had been settled, and both sides were pledged to accept their proposals, unless the two sides agreed to differ from them.*

'The Tories proposed single-member districts almost everywhere in boroughs, and only positively named one

* At the meeting of the 26th 'it was agreed that the Boundary Commissioners should consist of those gentlemen who had been advising me.'

exception—the City of London—but were evidently prepared to make some exceptions. They made our agreement on this point the condition of passing the Franchise Bill, of giving up the decrease of the Irish members from 103 to 100 which they urged, of giving up all forms of minority vote, and of giving up grouping. My own opinion and that of the Prime Minister were in favour of agreement. Hartington, who much disliked what he thought would be the extinction of the Whigs by an omnipresent caucus for candidates' selection, was hostile to the single-member system. I pointed out that we already proposed in our amended scheme 120 single-member borough seats out of 284 borough seats. We had thrown out to the Tories a question as to whether they would accept, say, 184 single-borough seats, and give us, say, not more than 100 for double-member seats; or, if they liked, two-thirds and one-third; and they did not positively decline this suggestion. Mr. Gladstone proposed to "save from compulsory division those urban constituencies, not Metropolitan, which, now possessing dual representation, are to have their representation neither increased nor diminished." (This was the ultimate agreement.) Also, that "cities and towns which are to receive four members and upwards, ten in number, should have one central or principal area set apart with two members." (This was purely personal on Mr. Gladstone's part and was universally rejected.)

'I argued warmly in favour of supporting Lord Salisbury's scheme (upon which he and I were absolutely agreed), I being delighted at having got seven more members for the Metropolis than were given by my scheme in its last form after the Cabinet had cut it down. In order to secure Chamberlain's support I told him "I might be able to save a seat for you and give the extended Birmingham seven if you liked to make that a condition, but in that case I must get one somewhere for Glasgow also out of the rest of Scotland, which is skinning flints."

'The reception of our proposals by the Cabinet, to which Grosvenor' (the Chief Whip) 'had been called in, was not altogether favourable. Childers talked about resigning, and Grosvenor was most hostile. We had the enormous advantage, however, that Chamberlain and I and Mr. Gladstone were the only three people who understood the subject, so that the others were unable to fight except in the form known as swearing at large. I was sent off from the Cabinet to Lord Salisbury to tell him that we could

agree. At three o'clock we had a further conference with the Conservative leaders, and came to an agreement on my base, Chamberlain, who was somewhat hostile, yielding to me, I going in and out to him, for he was at Downing Street in another room.'

Next day memoranda were exchanged between the parties to the Conference, and Mr. Gladstone was pledged to stand by the heads set down in his memoranda, and accept no provision outside of these without Sir Stafford Northcote's agreement. One detail is of interest as illustrating Mr. Gladstone's inherited Conservatism, which comes out all through these negotiations.

'Mr. Gladstone in sending this (memorandum) to me said: "You will see that Salisbury stands upon our printed statement as to Universities." Mr. Gladstone, knowing that I was strongly opposed to University representation, took this matter upon himself. He proposed a more general form of words in place of Lord Salisbury's pledge against new matters, and, as for Universities, wrote: "Assure Salisbury that I personally will *bind* myself out and out to this proposition."'

'In the afternoon I went to Lord Salisbury to settle the terms of agreement, and had to go four times from him to Mr. Gladstone, and four times back again, before we finished. . . .

'The next day I lunched with Mr. Gladstone to meet Miss Mary Anderson, the actress, and Princess Louise. I received at lunch a letter from Lord Salisbury making a few reservations . . . none of them difficult of acceptance.

'On December 2nd I got a note from Harcourt—to ask what I had been doing with the British Constitution in his absence. On December 8th I had a serious grumble from Spencer from Dublin as to my having settled with Salisbury who were to be the Irish Commissioners, and only asked the Irish Government after the thing was done. I had undoubtedly been wrong, and can only say that Spencer let me off cheaply. . . .'

Sir Charles's holiday in the South of France, whither he went on December 17th, was broken by copies of a correspondence between Lord Spencer and Lord Salisbury, the latter writing 'with much sound and fury' on the question of another Conservative Boundary Commissioner for Ireland.

'Lord Salisbury had always been so extremely soft and sweet to me that it was a revelation to find him writing to Spencer in the style of Harcourt or of Chamberlain when in a passion.'

'Sir Stafford Northcote also wrote to me upon the subject, and passing on to Scotland in his letter, added, "It is, I think, understood that we may have a free fight over the grouping of Scotch boroughs." This question of the Scotch boroughs was afterwards referred to me and Charles Dalrymple (M.P. for Buteshire), and I gave Dalrymple one or two changes that he wanted, which, I think, did not matter.'

Such difficulties were few and subordinate. The scheme was settled in principle, for after the Arlington Street compact

'I wrote the letter to the Boundary Commissioners the same night, and after I had signed their instructions on December 5th I had a pause in my Redistribution work for some time.'

But at the end of December Lord Hartington wrote:

'I think it will take two of us all our time to work the Bill through; and you know so much more about it than anybody else that you must necessarily take the greatest share of the details';

and ended with an invitation to Sir Charles to stay at Hardwick to do some preliminary work on the measure.

CHAPTER XXXVII

FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN 1884

MRS. MARK PATTISON

I.

During 1884 'I warned Lord Granville, Mr. Gladstone, Fitzmaurice, and Childers, that I should not in future be able to speak on foreign affairs on account of the terrible work of the Redistribution Bill, and of the Royal Commission,' for 'I was now so busy with the preparation for working the Redistribution Bill through the House, and with the Report of the Royal Commission, that I objected to receiving Foreign Office papers not sent to other members of the Cabinet; . . . but Lord Granville insisted that I should still see them, and circulated a letter to that effect.'

During 1884 and 1885 Foreign Office work was not only exacting, but was connected with acute disagreements in the Ministry itself. It has been seen how closely Sir Charles was occupied with the Egyptian question, and how constantly he found himself opposed to Lord Hartington in his views of policy. Moreover, out of the Egyptian difficulty there sprang a general divergence from France, and this led to action by France in various quarters of the globe calculated to offend British susceptibilities and to injure British prestige. Sir Charles, friend of France as he was, had been strong for resenting and resisting such action, and this attitude had brought him into conflict with those who on the whole had supported him in Egyptian matters. A new factor was now introduced. Bismarck had previously been content to urge on the French in their colonization policy, but in 1884 the German Chancellor, who in 1883 had been working out his schemes of national insurance, found his hand forced by the Colonial party, and, in view of the

coming German elections, could no longer afford to ignore them. Bismarck, "contrary to his conviction and his will," said Lord Ampthill, accepted a policy of colonization, which had the secondary effect of harassing and humiliating the British Liberal Administration.* Sir Charles, who realized that every such annexation meant the exclusion of British trade from an actual or potential market, fought for strong British action, but he fought against the older Liberals of the Cabinet. Again and again the Radical leaders were overborne by Mr. Gladstone.

The German Government had demanded protection for a German firm of traders who had established themselves in the territory of Angra Pequena, on the west coast of Africa, 280 miles south of Walfisch Bay. Lord Granville, after considerable delays, caused chiefly by the necessity of consulting the Colonial Office, which in its turn had to consult the Cape Government, where a change of Ministry was impending, objected to the declaration of a German protectorate.

'*June* 14*th*, 1884.—At a Cabinet at Lord Granville's house on Conference. . . . Waddington waiting in another room.

'H. Bismarck was also in the house, and had been very rude to Lord Granville about Angra Pequena, which was mentioned to the Cabinet, which would do nothing.

'*June* 21*th*— . . . Angra Pequena was mentioned, and it was decided that Bismarck, who was greatly irritated with the Government, was to have all he wanted.

'On September 22nd Chamberlain came to me on his return from abroad. He told me that H. Bismarck had told him that the German Chancellor was very angry at having had no answer to a full statement of German views as to Angra Pequena and other colonial matters, which had been sent to Lord Granville on August 30th, and he was astonished to learn that the Cabinet had not seen his letter. . . .

'On the 27th Lord Granville had in the meantime written: "I will send you my letter and Bismarck's answer, but I do not wish the correspondence to be mentioned. . . . My only excuse, but a good one, for acting merely as a medium between the German Government and the Colonial Office, was that I had continually the most positive

* *Life of Granville*, vol. ii., p. 355.

assurances in London, and still more in Berlin, that Bismarck was dead against German colonization—as he *was*." '*

This was the first of a series of instances in which, to Sir Charles's great disgust, the British Foreign and Colonial Offices 'lay down to Germany.'

Since the annexation of part of New Guinea by Queensland had been disavowed in April, 1883, all Australia was vehemently concerned over the ultimate fate of this territory, and pressed the home Government to forestall other Powers by occupying it.

'June 27th we discussed New Guinea, as to which Lord Derby was getting into serious trouble.

'On July 5th there was a Cabinet called to consider what was called the "crisis"—our relation with the House of Lords over the Franchise. But so peculiar is the British Empire that, although the Cabinet was called upon this question, we immediately proceeded to consider for the greater portion of the day matters in Sumatra, in the Malay Archipelago, and the Pacific, and . . . the affairs of New Guinea and so forth. Harcourt, Lord Selborne, and Mr. Gladstone violently opposed the occupation of New Guinea —Harcourt and Mr. Gladstone on anti-imperialistic grounds, and Lord Selborne on grounds connected with the protection of the aborigines against the rapacity and violence of the Queensland settlers. Hartington, Lord Granville, Derby, Kimberley, Chamberlain, and I, took the Australian view. The matter was adjourned, as matters always are adjourned when the Prime Minister is against the Cabinet.'

'*August 6th.*—We then attacked New Guinea, most of us wanting annexation, some protectorate, and decided on the latter to please the Chancellor and Mr. Gladstone.'

'*August 9th.*—We first discussed German colonies in the South Seas. Bismarck had seized North New Guinea, and we decided to stick to the long peninsula which faces both north and south.'

Bismarck's immediate answer was to annex, not only the north coast, but what is now called the Bismarck Archipelago.

* On this chapter of African history, see *Life of Granville*, vol. ii., chap. x., *passim*.

'*October 4th.*—Next came New Guinea. Were we to insist, as we had done previously, on keeping the Germans off the north coast of the long eastern peninsula? The previous decision was reversed. The Cabinet, however, vetoed a suggestion for the joint commission with Germany as to land claims in the Pacific Islands being allowed to meddle in New Guinea. We then decided to annex one quarter, and several members of the Cabinet expressed a hope that *this time* the thing would "really be done." '*

These instances did not stand alone. Two native chiefs in the Cameroons had so far back as 1882 proposed to be taken under British protection, and Sir Charles had pressed acceptance of their offer. The matter had been discussed in the Cabinet, and Lord Derby and Lord Granville were still debating what should be done, when a German expedition seized the territory.

'On September 18th I received from Chamberlain a letter from Leipsic, in which he said: "The Cameroons! It is enough to make one sick. As you say, we decided to assume the protectorate eighteen months ago, and I thought it was all settled. If the Board of Trade or Local Government Board managed their business after the fashion of the Foreign Office and Colonial Office, you and I would deserve to be hung." '

Those who thought with Sir Charles felt considerable anxiety about possibilities on the East Coast of Africa. The Cameroons were lost, but a protectorate over Zanzibar had been offered, and Zanzibar was the outlet for an important trading district, which the forward party thought of securing. The Prime Minister was opposed to all such schemes. 'On December 14th Mr. Gladstone broke out against the proposed annexations in what is now called the Kilimanjaro district.'

He wrote to Sir Charles: "Terribly have I been puzzled and perplexed on finding a group of the soberest men among us to have concocted a scheme such as that touching the

* A useful sketch of these events has recently appeared in the paper read before the Royal Geographical Society by Sir Everard Im Thurn, K.C.M.G. See *Journal*, vol. xlv., No. 5, April, 1915.

mountain country behind Zanzibar with an unrememberable name. There *must* somewhere or other be reasons for it which have not come before me. I have asked Granville whether it may not stand over for a while."*

Mr. Gladstone could not bring himself to understand that the great States of Europe had, almost without premeditation, moved into a field of policy which involved the apportionment of regions scarcely yet known in any detail to the geographers; nor did he realize the far-reaching consequences of the acquisition or refusal of some of these districts. The question of the Congo, for example, involved, as Sir Robert Morier had foreseen, the settlement of the whole West African coast. In April Sir Charles had recorded how he

'had to read up African papers, and found reason to fear that the King of the Belgians was contemplating the sale of his Congo dominions to France. We had a meeting at the Foreign Office in the afternoon,† at which were present Lord Granville, Kimberley, Chamberlain, myself, and Fitzmaurice, and, finding that we could not possibly carry our

* The allusion is to the treaties with native chiefs which were negotiated by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Harry Johnston in 1883-84. These treaties were the foundation of what is now known as British East Africa, and related mainly to the Kilimanjaro and Taveita districts. It would appear that Mr. Gladstone himself had at first expressed an interest in the development of British influence "over this hinterland of snow mountains and elevated plateaux," to which his attention had been drawn by the report of Mr. Joseph Thomson. Speaking subsequently at the Colonial Institute, Sir Harry Johnston said that "about twenty years ago he was making preparations for his first expedition to British Africa. He had a very distinguished predecessor, whom he regarded as the real originator of British East Africa: Mr. Joseph Thomson, who died all too young in 1895. His great journey from Mombasa was commenced in 1882 and finished in 1884. . . . His reports sent home to the Royal Geographical Society had attracted the attention of Mr. Gladstone; and there was another British statesman, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, who perhaps more than most of his colleagues saw the possibility of a white man's settlement in Equatorial Africa, and who chose to select him (Sir H. Johnston) as one agency by which this work should be commenced" (*Journal* of the Royal Colonial Institute, 1903-04, No. 5, p. 317). The territory covered by the Kilimanjaro Treaties was ceded to Germany under the arrangement made at the end of 1885, but the remainder has continued to be British (see Sir Harry Johnston, *A History of the Colonization of Africa by Alien Races*, pp. 376-409.

† April 26th, 1884.

Congo Treaty with Portugal, we determined to find a way out by referring it to the Powers.'*

In October he goes on to relate how

'Lord Granville had been frightened by Plessen, the Prussian, coming to invite him to a Conference at Berlin, but explained that he had been much relieved on finding, as he put it, that it was only about the Congo. It was, however, the famous Africa Conference which virtually settled the whole future of the Dark Continent.'

Sir Charles notes the result in January, 1885:

'The sittings of the West African Conference, as it was called, were at this time taking place at Berlin, and the General Act was signed in the following month—that of February, 1885.† I was very busy with this work, in which

* The following extract from an article in the *Quarterly Review* explains the importance attached by Sir Charles to this Congo treaty, and the far-reaching results which it would have had:

"In 1875 the results of Lieutenant Cameron's great journey across Africa became known. . . . They revealed . . . the material for a Central African Empire awaiting the enterprise of a European or an Asiatic power. There is now little doubt that, had the famous treaty negotiated by Sir Charles Dilke, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, and Sir Robert Morier in 1884, been ratified and carried out . . . the Congo Basin would have been added to the British Empire, together with Delagoa Bay and Nyasaland, before its time; with Dahomey also, and an all-British West African Coast between Sierra Leone and the Gaboon" (*Quarterly Review*, January, 1906).

It would perhaps have been more accurate had the author spoken of the "treaty proposed to be negotiated." The original plan of Sir Robert Morier—part of a large scheme for the settlement of all outstanding questions with Portugal—contemplated *inter alia* some territorial acquisition on the Congo by Great Britain. But the Cabinet put a veto on this. The Foreign Office had therefore to fall back on the alternative but less ambitious plan contained in the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty of 1884, which was never ratified, owing to the opposition of Germany. (*Life of Granville*, vol. ii., chap. x.; and *supra*, I. 418. See also on this subject the observations of Sir Harry Johnston in his *History*, quoted above, pp. 277, 278, 343, 405.)

† He notes in this month, February 4th, at "a meeting at the Admiralty of all the Ministers in town, Childers and I stand alone in support of Portugal as regards the Congo. I stated very freely what I still believe, that we had behaved shamefully to the Portuguese; but this neither convinced Lord Granville at the time, nor excused the subsequent behaviour of the Portuguese."

On February 11th Sir Charles wrote to a diplomatic friend: "I cannot quite follow the present phase of Congo, but I hope that nothing will be done to back up the rascally association against Portugal. I believe that Portugal will seize the disputed territory, and I certainly should if I were the Portuguese Ministry."

I had long taken a deep interest, and was much relieved when I found that what I thought the folly of the House of Commons in upsetting our Congo Treaty, and preventing a general arrangement with the Portuguese as regarded both West Africa and South-East Africa, had turned out better than could have been anticipated, owing to the interposition of the Germans. My joy was short-lived, for King Leopold has not kept his promises.'

The interests thus claimed or created beyond the seas had to be defended upon the seas. Either Great Britain must be prepared to abate her pretensions, or she must strengthen her power to enforce them. Dilke and Chamberlain were strongly against giving way to anything which could be regarded as usurpation. Mr. Gladstone, on the other hand, pointed out that to maintain a control, or veto, over the allocation of unappropriated portions of the globe meant large increase of naval expenditure, and he set his face against both. On December 2nd

"Naval expenditure was mentioned. The Cabinet had been about to agree both to Northbrook's proposals (for Egypt) and to the sums suggested for the defence of coaling-stations, when Mr. Gladstone suddenly broke out, told us that he did not much care for himself, as he now intended to retire, but that had he been twenty-five years younger nothing could have induced him to consent. A loan he would not tolerate. Then there was a general veer round, and all went against the fortifications. Mr. Gladstone, however, said that he should retire as soon as the Redistribution Bill was carried.'

The affairs of South Africa, where Great Britain was consolidating her position, are also touched on in 1884.

'On March 22nd we had another Cabinet without Mr. Gladstone. The first matter discussed was Zululand, Chamberlain opposing Kimberley and Derby, who wished to increase the British Protectorate. At last Kimberley said: "I see the Cabinet do not want more niggers," and dropped the scheme.

'On May 17th . . . we decided to defend the Zululand reserve against all comers.'

Later in the year there are entries as to the annexation of Bechuanaland:

October 4th, 'Bechuanaland was discussed, as to which Chamberlain wanted to go to war with the Boers, and had written to me.'

And on November 11th 'there was a Cabinet called on the Bechuanaland trouble, and we discussed votes of money for the Gordon and Bechuanaland expeditions.'

II.

During this year the Central Asian question, always of first-rate interest to Sir Charles, constantly claimed his attention.

'On February 22nd there was a meeting at the Foreign Office which was intended to be a meeting about my Central Asian scheme, but which developed into a virtual Cabinet. There were present Mr. Gladstone, Hartington, Kimberley, Northbrook, myself, Fitzmaurice, and J. K. Cross, Under-Secretary of State for India. The delimitation of the Afghan frontier was further considered and pretty much decided.

'Pleasures of Office. I dined with the Dean of Westminster, and was called away in the middle of dinner to make a speech about Central Asia, and got back again for coffee.'

'On March 5th Hartington suggested that we should recommence the Quetta railroad, and it was decided to give a hint to Lord Ripon to ask for it.'

'*August 5th.*—Lord Granville informed us that the Shah was alarmed at the Russian advance upon the Persian frontier, and asked us for promises.

'*August 7th.*—There was a meeting of the Central Asian Committee. . . . Lord Granville, Hartington, Kimberley, I, and Fitzmaurice were present, with Philip Currie. As to the amount of support to be given to Persia Lord Granville wrote an excellent despatch, while we were talking. It was settled that we were to repeat our statements at St. Petersburg at a convenient opportunity, but to ask the Shah that, as an earnest of his good intentions towards us, the Persian rivers should be thrown open to our trade—not a bad touchstone. We discussed the Afghan boundary, and decided that, if the Russians would not agree to our proposed starting-point for the delimitation, we would send

an Afghan British Commission without them to make our own delimitation.'

'*November* 18*th*.—Edmond Fitzmaurice consulted me as to Central Asia. The Russians had agreed in principle to the delimitation, but . . . had made much delay in questions of detail.'

On the Committee Sir Charles and Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice were unequally yoked with the lethargic Secretary of State for War. Lord Fitzmaurice has vivid recollection of Lord Hartington's entry at one sitting half an hour late, after his fashion. The question turned on the probable action of some Afghan chiefs, whereupon Lord Hartington broke silence by observing reflectively: "I wonder what an Afghan chief is like." Sir Charles, with a glance at the high-nosed, bearded, deliberate face of his colleague, pushed a scribbled note to Lord Edmond: "I expect an Afghan chief is very like the Right Honourable the Marquis of Hartington."

Sir Charles's interest in this Central Asian question, where political and military interests lay so close together, led to a correspondence, and the correspondence to a friendship, with Lord Roberts.

'In March I received a letter from Sir Frederick Roberts, not yet personally known to me, in which he enclosed a memorandum by him called "Is an Invasion of India by Russia Possible?" In his letter he said that he had given up the idea of returning to Kandahar, and only desired that we should make ourselves secure upon our new frontier, improve our relations with the Afghans, and clearly show that we could not allow the Russians to establish themselves in Northern Afghanistan. In his printed paper he showed that Persia might be looked upon as virtually Russian, and that what we had to do was to prevent Afghanistan falling into the same position. He incidentally admitted the strength of the view of those of us who had advocated the evacuation of Kandahar by saying that the Afghans "must be assured that we have no designs upon their country, and that even should circumstances require a British occupation of Kandahar, the direction of all internal affairs would be left in their hands; we must guarantee them the integrity of their kingdom." He

strongly supported my view that no time should be lost in defining the northern boundary of Afghanistan.

'Roberts went on to lay down the principle that the main body of a Russian army destined for the invasion of India must advance by Herat and Girishk on Kandahar, whence, if not defeated, the Russians must move by Ghazni, Kabul, and the Khyber. Sir Frederick Roberts pointed out that India could not place in the field, under the then conditions, more than 40,000 men, with from 130 to 140 guns. Part of the native army could be relied on, but, writing as Commander-in-Chief in Madras, he pointed out that the Southern Indian Sepoys had not the courage and physique to fight against Russian troops, or even against natives from the north. On the other hand, many of our northern native troops would be of doubtful loyalty in the event of Russia becoming predominant in Afghanistan. "Sir Fred" laid down the principle of completing railway communication to a point near Kandahar, with a bridge across the Indus near Sukkur, and generally described the plan of a vigorous offensive on the Kandahar side and a defensive on the Khyber line, which has since been adopted.'

'At the end of May I received from Sir Frederick Roberts a letter in reply to mine, acknowledging the receipt of the Defence of India papers which I have named. I had told him that the real danger was that Russia would detach Herat by local intrigue without appearing, and that I did not see how we could prevent this alarming danger. Sir Frederick admitted the truth of my view, and again pointed out the importance of trying to win the friendship of the Afghans. He favoured my proposals for the delimitation of the northern frontier of Afghanistan. "But I much doubt Russia's now agreeing to any proposal of the sort." He ended by expressing his gratification at our issue of the order for the completion of the railway to Quetta and Pishin.'

Discussions preliminary to the Budget occupied the Cabinet in January, 1884, and Mr. Childers announced that the Army and Navy Estimates would leave him with a deficit, chiefly because the newly introduced parcel post had been 'a disastrous failure.'

'In the course of this Cabinet of January 24th, I for the first time stated my views on the subject of army reform. I have a slip of paper which passed backwards and forwards

between Chamberlain and myself, headed "The condition of the army." I wrote: "Do you remember my saying one night in our cab to you that I could not go to the W.O. because of my views upon this very point?" Chamberlain wrote back: "But that really is the reason why you should go. I have the lowest opinion of army administration wherever I can test it—contracts, for instance. It is most ludicrously inefficient." To which I replied: "The Duke of Cambridge and the old soldiers and the Queen would make it very nearly hopeless."'

The War Office never tempted Sir Charles as did the Admiralty, where, he wrote to Lord Granville in 1885, "I fear I should be extravagant."

III.

A holiday home in the South of France had ceased to be easily accessible to the 'most hard-worked member of the Government.' Though for many years he retained his little villa of "La Sainte Campagne" near Toulon, nestling in its olive groves with, from windows and cliff, the view of the red porphyry rocks across the deep blue of the bay, he had for some time been negotiating for the purchase of strips of land by the riverside near Shepperton, and among the pines at Pyrford.

In 1883 the building of the cottage at Dockett Eddy was begun, over the door of which he set this inscription:

> "Parva sed apta mihi, sed nulli obnoxia, sed non
> Sordida, parta meo sed tamen ære, domus."*

This was to be always his riverside home, and in it he always slept, even after the larger house had been built near by. There he was one of the river's most jealous guardians, and in this year notes that he

gave evidence before the Select Committee on the River Thames, and was instrumental in securing the insertion of a

* Thus rendered in English by the Rev. W. Tuckwell:

> "'Tis tiny, but it suits me quite,
> Invades no jealous neighbour's right;
> 'Tis neat and clean, and—pleasant thought—
> I earned the cash with which 'twas bought."

(It was bought out of his official salary.)

clause in the Bill, afterwards produced by the Committee, which put an end to shooting on the Thames, and did a great deal to protect the quiet of the river.'

The Dockett cottage was not finished till 1885, and:

'On Saturday, March 21st, I took a holiday on the river, starting down with my punt from Taplow Court, and bringing her down to Dockett Eddy, of which I now took possession, the little house being now finished.'

On May 22nd, 1884,

'I settled to go on Whitsun Tuesday to look at Lord Onslow's land at Pyrford, for a winter house. I had forgotten that my ancestor Sir R. Parkhurst had been Lord of the Manor of Pyrford, and that my ancestor Sir Edward Zouche had lived even nearer to my new purchase, at old Woking St. Peter, whence I hear his bells.'

Late in the year

'I settled on my motto for my cottage at Pyrford—a line of Ruskin, "This is the true nature of Home,—it is the place of Peace."

'The selection meant in my mind that home was about to exist once more for me.'

'In July, 1884, Mrs. Mark Pattison had been left a widow by the death of the Rector of Lincoln College. She went to live at The Lodge, Headington, near Oxford.

'Later in the year we became privately engaged, and told Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pattison, Mrs. Westlake, Mrs. Earle, and Mrs. Grant Duff, as well as Chamberlain, but no one else. It was decided that others should not be told until much later, and to Lord Granville, who (without mentioning a name) congratulated me, I had to feign ignorance of what he meant. Mrs. Pattison settled to go to India in February, March, or April, 1885, to stay with the Governor of Madras and Mrs. Grant Duff in the hills, and to return in September or October for our wedding, which before her departure was fixed for October. Before the return there happened Emilia's typhoid fever at Ootacamund, and our terrible misfortunes; but the date of October, 1885, was fated to remain the date, and Chamberlain, who had, before Emilia left, consented to be best man, was best man still. The place of the wedding alone was changed—from Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, to the parish church

of Chelsea. Mrs. Grant Duff wrote to us on being told a most pleasant letter.

'Chamberlain wrote the best letter of his life to her.'

This was the letter:

"40, PRINCE'S GARDENS, S.W.,
"*November 5th*, 1884.

"MY DEAR MRS. PATTISON,

"Dilke has told me his great secret, and I sympathize with him so warmly in the new prospects of happiness which are opening for him that I have asked leave to write to you and to offer my hearty congratulations.

"I venture to think that we are already friends, and this adds greatly to the pleasure which this intelligence has given me.

"For many years I have been on the most intimate terms with your future husband; and while I share the general opinion of the world as to his talents and force of character, I have better reason than any other man to appreciate his generosity and goodness, and the chivalrous delicacy which a natural reserve conceals from casual acquaintance.

"I prize his friendship as the best gift of my public life, and I rejoice unfeignedly that he will have a companion so well able to share his noblest ambitions and to brighten his life.

"I know that you will forgive me this intrusion, which is justified by the fact that next to yourself I am more interested than anyone in the change which will bring so much happiness to my dear friend.

"Believe me always,
"Yours most sincerely,
"J. CHAMBERLAIN."

MRS. MARK PATTISON.

From a photograph.

To face p. 92 Vol. II.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

DIVIDED COUNSELS

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY, 1885

AT the close of 1884 Mr. Gladstone's colleagues expected that he would resign, and it appears that he had really thought of doing so, provided that a ministry could be formed under Lord Hartington's leadership. Franchise and Redistribution were virtually settled, and there was no legislative proposal before either the Cabinet or the country on which Lord Hartington was in marked disagreement with his colleagues. But they were still "an Egyptian Government," and here differences seemed to be irreconcilable.

'The Egyptian policy of the Government had now become thoroughly unpopular, and those of us who, although we had favoured intervention as necessary at the time, had deplored alike the engagements of our predecessors which had made it necessary, and the occupation which, unnecessarily in my opinion, followed it, were as unpopular as were those like Hartington, and the majority of the peers in the Cabinet, who had insisted not only on going, but on staying —at least in Cairo. It is curious to reflect how intervention in the East is judged by subsequent complications which do not affect the principle. The intervention of 1860-61 in Syria gave considerable popularity to the Government who agreed to it, and to Lord Dufferin who conducted it on the spot; and it was as popular in France which found the troops, as in England which found the man. By that intervention Syria was pacified and war in the East prevented, and ultimately it was followed by evacuation and reversion to what diplomatists style in their jargon "an improved *status quo*."

'It is too often now (1891) forgotten that we actually

proposed in 1884 to France (in connection with a Conference which took place, obtaining therefore to some extent, it might be contended, valuable consideration for our proposal) that we would, at or before the expiration of our occupation, propose to the Powers and to the Porte a scheme for the neutralization of Egypt on the basis of the principles applied to Belgium. A document which we printed at the beginning of 1885 gave our suggested wording for the neutralization treaty, declaring that Egypt should be an independent and perpetually neutral State under the guarantee of the contracting parties; limiting the strength of the Egyptian army, the claim of Turkey to military aid from Egypt, and so forth.'

The suggestion was not welcomed by the Powers.

'On New Year's Day I left Antibes for Paris, which I reached on Friday, the 2nd January, and quitted for London on Saturday, the 3rd.

'Chamberlain wrote to me that Mr. Gladstone was threatened with a return of his illness, that he required rest, that Egypt had been for the moment tided over, though it might at any moment break up the Government. It had been decided to send a firm but courteous despatch to France demanding immediate consideration of our proposals, failing which we should "take our own course." Chamberlain, however, added, "What that course is to be is the question on which agreement appears impossible. It is 'scuttle and bankruptcy' against 'protectorate and guarantee.' Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."'

Mr. Gladstone was with Dilke and Chamberlain in opposing protectorate or guarantee in any shape. But there were other questions of Imperial policy upon which the Imperialism of these two Ministers divided them from Mr. Gladstone.

'New Guinea had also been discussed, and Chamberlain was for demanding explanations from the Germans. Zululand had been mentioned. Chamberlain supported the annexation of the coast of Pondoland: Mr. Gladstone, with the support of Trevelyan, "opposing any attempt to anticipate Germany."

'On Sunday, January 4th, Chamberlain wrote again from Birmingham. His letter shows that I was anxious for resignation on the Egyptian question, and Chamberlain

replied that he could not find a satisfactory boat to leave the ship in, and that he thought that the Government had more lives than a cat. Chamberlain added that he had to speak on January 5th, and should find it difficult to steer between Jingoism and peace-at-any-price.'

'He also was engaged in preparing a programme for the future to be set forth at Ipswich. This last was the memorable "Unauthorized Programme."'

A first instalment of this programme was given by Mr. Chamberlain in a speech at Birmingham, which advocated restriction of game-preserving, provision of land for agricultural labourers, and better housing. The accusations of Communism brought against Mr. Chamberlain began at this point; and they, of course, redoubled after he had proposed on January 10th at Ipswich to give local bodies power for compulsory acquisition of land.

At this juncture Mr. Chamberlain was absent from London, and communicating only by letter with Sir Charles, whom he had not seen since the middle of December, when Sir Charles crossed to Paris, on his way to Toulon; and before the unauthorized programme was launched Lord Hartington contemplated forming a Government which would have given the foremost positions to Dilke and Chamberlain.

'On the morning of January 5th Harcourt had told me that Mr. Gladstone intended to resign, and that Lord Granville would follow Mr. Gladstone, in which case Hartington intended to make him, Harcourt, Chancellor, to move Lord Derby and Childers, to put in Rosebery,* to offer Chamberlain the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, and me the Secretaryship of State for Foreign Affairs. But, great as were the offices proposed, Chamberlain and I could not have consented to remain in if Mr. Gladstone had gone out notoriously dissatisfied. If he had gone out on grounds of health alone, it would, of course, have been another matter.'

In a letter,

'probably of Monday morning, January 5th, Chamberlain said that Mr. Gladstone's retirement was possible, and

* As Secretary for the Colonies.

might be necessary; that Hartington and Harcourt could bring it about; but that we must be most careful not to allow them to say that we had been engaged in an intrigue with them against Mr. Gladstone. He thought that we ought to tell them frankly that we could enter into no negotiations with them, and to put this in a Memorandum to which we could afterwards appeal. On the other hand, he was willing to state his views as to policy, provided all reference to personal questions was avoided. As his Egyptian policy, he stated "immediate bankruptcy, communication to the Powers of our fixed intention to leave, declaration that we would not allow intervention by other Powers in our place, and Conference to settle details of neutralization." As to domestic policy, he agreed in my suggestion that we should insist upon an immediate Civil List Committee, and proposed an inquiry into labour. He gave me leave to discuss his letter with Harcourt ("the latter has always been a most loyal friend, though he cannot be expected to agree with us in everything"), and I did so before the Cabinet of January 7th.'

By this time Mr. Chamberlain had come to London, and there is no indication that his speech at Birmingham had created friction. But the party which wished to offer resistance to Germany's high-handed policy had been strengthened by a new instance of usurpation.

'Mr. Gladstone was absent from this Cabinet. The first matter discussed was that of Samoa raised by me. There had been received on the night of the 6th from the Governor of New Zealand a telegram saying that the Germans had made a treaty giving the whole authority of Government to the German Consul. While Münster had been telling Lord Granville that Germany would take no step hostile to Samoan independence, the Germans had sent warships there with secret orders, and had hoisted their flag in various parts of the islands. The next subject mentioned was that of Zanzibar, and it was decided that we should warn Germany that we would not brook interference there. At the same time I had much doubt whether Lord Granville would act upon the instructions of the Cabinet in this matter, and my doubts were justified. The third matter was that of the Pondo coast, and also the coast of Zululand. Mr. Gladstone alone objecting to a protectorate and being absent, it was decided to have one.'

'Then came the old question of sending troops to Suakim;* then that of Egyptian Finance, on which Harcourt broached his scheme by which the United Kingdom was to pay the differe ce caused by a reduction of the rate of interest, to which scheme Chamberlain and I were opposed. We were informed that the Queen "most strongly protested against our binding ourselves to leave Egypt."'

Meanwhile the Radicals in the Cabinet considered their concerted action in view of a change of leadership.

'We settled during the Cabinet that Trevelyan, Chamberlain, and I should meet at my room at the Local Government Board, directly the Cabinet was over, to discuss the terms on which we would join a Hartington administration; and we did so, finding Egypt and my proposed inquiry into the Civil List the only real difficulties. The Civil List could be got over, as it was certain that the Whigs would give in to pressure from us upon this point. But Harcourt had informed us that our Egyptian policy made the formation of a Government impossible, as Hartington would not consent to accept office on our Egyptian policy.'

It was very difficult to come to an agreement about Egypt. Lord Derby had declared that the only alternatives were guaranteed neutrality or annexation. Dilke and Chamberlain stood for the former, considering their duty done if they prevented occupation by any other European Power, and took steps to establish internal order—which meant completing the organization of an Egyptian army. There was a third policy; for Lord Hartington, who repeatedly in public repudiated the idea of annexation, insisted upon the retention of a single control during a prolonged occupation. In this he had the strongest backing from the Queen.

'Chamberlain at our meeting added a fresh proviso—namely, that Parnell or some other Irishman should be Chief Secretary. I afterwards informed Harcourt of Chamberlain's views, adding that Chamberlain was willing to avoid

* Colonial troops were offered about this time, and the Diary contains the entry, February 20th: "The sending of a Colonial force to Suakim. Hartington and Derby had snubbed the Colonists, and were snubbed by the Cabinet in consequence."

all personal questions, although he much wished that John Morley should be in the Cabinet,* that he wholly rejected Harcourt's plan for Egypt as being a bribe to buy off the Powers, forced on us by unworthy fears Chamberlain wished, if his own Egyptian policy was not adopted, to simply evacuate the country.

'Chamberlain, I was empowered to say, had also mentioned the English land question, and was opposed to allowing Lord Salisbury to come in,' as this, he said to Sir Charles, 'would surely be a hopeless confession of weakness, and give him a chance with the new electors.

'I argued against Chamberlain's Egyptian policy, not on the merits, but on the chances of our getting our own way. "I doubt our getting our way as to bankruptcy, and am not sure that we ought to put that forward as sole or chief cause for not joining Hartington." To this Chamberlain replied: "True. But how can we join another Government without any settled policy about Egypt? Harcourt's alternative is impossible; then what is there? I should refuse to join Hartington unless we can agree as to Egypt policy, and if we do agree, there can in that case be no reason for letting Salisbury in."'

Egypt was in Sir Charles's view the main, but not the only, difficulty. The Government policy of "lying down to Germany" was another. At the same date:

'January 7th, Chamberlain and I had a conference with regard to Samoa, in which I pointed out that if we quarrelled with France about Egypt she would have all Europe behind her, whereas in our dealings with Germany about Samoa, Zanzibar, and other matters, Germany would stand alone.'†

* Sir Charles had noted his own strong wish to this effect in the previous year.

† A letter to Lord Hartington from his secretary, Mr. Brett, which is quoted by Mr. Bernard Holland (*Life of Duke of Devonshire*, vol. ii., pp. 38, 39), suggests that the Hartington section had difficulty in reconciling Sir Charles's attitude on other Imperial matters with his Egyptian policy: "It would indeed be a farce, after all the fuss about the Cameroons and Angra Pequena, to allow Suakim, which is the port of Khartoum, and the Nile to pass into the hands of foreigners." The answer is, first, that Sir Charles would certainly never have consented to let any port in Egypt or the Soudan pass into the hands of any European Power: his proposal was neutralization of Egypt under international guarantee; and, secondly, that the questions were governed by different conditions, which he set out in conference with Mr. Chamberlain about Samoa.

January 9th, 'I had decided that if I resigned, or if I refused to join a Hartington administration, I should mention four subjects — Egypt, Samoa, Zanzibar, and (probably) the Civil List inquiry (if I were not completely satisfied). On the same day I was at work on our draft despatch to Sir Edward Malet as to Zanzibar, which had been settled on the 8th after the Cabinet of the 7th, but which did not go off until the 14th. On January 14th I noted in my Diary, "The Zanzibar despatch went. Seven days' delay. I know that two days' delay was caused by the necessity of sending to Osborne and to the Prime Minister, but why seven days?"

'On January 21st the first matter discussed was that of New Guinea, in which we found ourselves in difficulties caused by absence of jurisdiction over foreigners, and we agreed in consequence to annexation.'

The situation with Germany was undoubtedly grave, but ought not, Sir Charles maintained, to entail the sacrifice of Zanzibar. On February 24th Count Münster, the German Ambassador, told Mr. Alfred de Rothschild that he expected to be withdrawn, but that New Guinea was the only serious matter in dispute.

'On Tuesday, February 24th, I breakfasted at Alfred de Rothschild's house, to meet the German Ambassador, Count Münster, at the latter's wish. Alfred de Rothschild did not sit down with us, and we were *tête-à-tête*. Münster was very free in his remarks about Bismarck. "No one ever contradicts him." "He sees none but flatterers." "His life is a period to be got through."'

Two March entries are apposite here:

'On Wednesday, March 4th, Rosebery wrote to me to ask me to dine with him to meet "Herbert Bismarck," who had suddenly arrived, but I was engaged to the Speaker's dinner, and had to put off seeing young Bismarck till Thursday, the 5th. He had come over to try to force us to dismiss Lord Granville and Lord Derby. I noted in my Diary:* "He puts us in a difficult position as individuals,

* Sir Charles's Diaries, to portions of which certain biographers had access, are at this point quoted by Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice in his *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii., p. 430. The passage runs:

"Negotiations with Germany on the vexed colonial questions were meanwhile proceeding, more particularly with regard to New

for how can we say to this personally friendly fellow that we do not think Lord Granville's speech in the Lords on Friday foolish, or how say that we think that the allusion to old Bismarck's dislike of Münster in a recent despatch from Malet ought to have been published?"

'On Friday, March 6th, I saw Herbert Bismarck again twice. . . . I having expressed anxiety about Zanzibar, he told me that his father had directed him to say that he "considered Zanzibar as independent as Turkey or Russia." It is to my mind shameful that, after this, Lord Granville should have begun and Lord Salisbury have rapidly completed arrangements by which the Zanzibar mainland, the whole trade of which was in our hands, was handed over to Germany.'

'On March 7th we discussed Herbert Bismarck's views on the Cameroons, on German claims in New Guinea (on this head we settled with him), and on Pondoland.'

While the difficulties with Germany were being discussed, differences as to Egyptian policy and our relations with France continued.

On January 20th, Egypt once more threatened to break up the Government. France had proposed an international Commission of Inquiry into the financial situation.

'We discussed a French proposal which, as I wrote to the Chancellor, had at least one advantage—namely, "that it re-forms the majority in the Cabinet by uniting two of the three parties—yours and mine." Mr. Gladstone, Lord Granville, Kimberley, Derby, Harcourt, the Chancellor, Trevelyan, and Dilke, eight in all, supported taking the new French proposals as a basis. Chamberlain was absent ill. Northbrook, Hartington, Childers, to my astonishment, and Carlingford were against us. After the Cabinet Hartington wrote to Mr. Gladstone to say that he "could not accept the decision," and Northbrook supported him.' Next day, however, 'when we turned to Egyptian

Guinea. Sir Julian Pauncefote proposed a plan which it was hoped might satisfy the German Chancellor, and Count Herbert Bismarck reappeared as co-negotiator with Count Münster in London. Lord Rosebery, who had just joined the Cabinet as Lord Privy Seal, also took part in the negotiations. 'Herbert Bismarck came over again,' Sir Charles Dilke noted; 'if at his former visit he had only tried to get us to dismiss Lord Derby, on this occasion he wanted us to dismiss Lord Granville and Lord Derby.'"

finance, Trevelyan went over from our side to the other. Mr. Gladstone announced that what we had decided on the previous day was not to prevent our arguing against the French proposed inquiry, and thus Hartington was kept in.'

'On January 23rd I forwarded to Chamberlain a letter from Sandringham, which showed that the Queen had been alarmed at the possibility that my proposed Civil List inquiry might affect not only new grants, but also the Civil List arrangements made at the beginning of the reign. Chamberlain made a Delphic reply that, on the one hand, inquiry would be a farce if it did not include the existing Civil List, but that on the other hand there could be no intention to make any change in the arrangements with the Queen.'

'On January 28th, I heard from Sandringham that the Prince of Wales was going to Osborne the next day, and would broach to the Queen his friendliness to the idea of a new settlement of the Civil List. Chamberlain was anxious that no difficulty should be made by us on the occasion of the marriage of Princess Beatrice. He wrote: "*If alone*, I should wait for something or somebody to turn up. Before Prince Edward wants an allowance who knows what may happen? But I am perfectly ready to follow your lead or to lead to your prompting."'

All arrangements were being made on the assumption that Lord Hartington would become Prime Minister.

'I had been left by Mr. Gladstone in a certain doubt as to whether I was to be completely responsible for the Redistribution Bill, or whether Hartington was to share the responsibility. I wrote to Hartington: "Mr. Gladstone sends me everything on Redistribution, and expresses no opinion of his own. Northcote and Salisbury write to me only, and the whole thing is more and more in my hands. If I let things drift, it is clear that I shall practically have sole charge of the Bill, for no one else will know anything about it. I do not shrink from this at all. It is work I like. But, as you will probably be called on to form an Administration immediately after the passing of the Bill, don't you think it would look well, and that our people and the Press and the country would like it, if you were to take charge of

the Bill? If so, I had better have two or three days' work at it with you."

'Hartington had asked me to stay with him at Hardwick to talk it over, but it was only a Saturday to Monday visit from January 10th to 12th, and there were many people in the house, and our whole conversation was but very short; and Hartington continued to show but little desire to work at the detail, and the Bill could only be handled by those who knew its detail.'

Although the Opposition leaders had accepted the compact, it was at this time quite uncertain whether the House of Commons would consent to the Redistribution scheme—affecting as it did the interests of every member. The Fourth Party had not been consulted in the arrangement, and inevitable friction followed.

'On January 27th I had a correspondence with Northcote in reference to some mischief which had been made by Randolph Churchill. Northcote had been told by the Conservative Chief Whip, "Dilke told Randolph that the Government would have given more grouping if we had pressed for it." The Conservative party being angry at the absence of grouping of the boroughs, Northcote had taken up the point, but he now wrote: "Whatever Churchill said must have been in the nature of an inference of his own from what had previously passed, from which he had probably gathered that the Government were ready to concede grouping." But there was a lady in the case who had gossiped about what Northcote had said to her, and he promised to write to the offender.'

'On January 13th Mr. Gladstone wrote as to the Redistribution Bill: "The difficulty as I see it about communication with Northcote is that he seems to have little weight of influence, and to be afraid or unwilling to assume any responsibility. I have usually found him reasonable in his own views, but obliged to reserve his judgment until after consulting his friends, which consultations I have found always to end badly. On the other hand, it is, of course, necessary to pay him due respect. What may prove to be best under these circumstances is—(*a*) not to be bound always to consult HIM, (*b*) to consult him freely on the easier and smaller matters, but (*c*) in a stiff question, such as the

numbers of the House may prove to be, to get at Salisbury if possible, under whose wing Northcote will, I think, mostly be content to walk. (*d*) Or, if Salisbury cannot be got alone, then Northcote and Salisbury would be far preferable to Northcote alone." '

All these difficulties had to be met by Sir Charles. When the Bill actually came before the House, 'Mr. Gladstone instructed James to assist me in the conduct of it. But practically I had it to myself.' Lord Hartington had rendered invaluable service in the preliminary negotiations. But for such laborious work of detail as was needed to carry through this Bill, neither temperament nor surroundings had fitted him. His Hardwick home is thus described by Sir Charles in a letter which he wrote to Mrs. Pattison:

"I am writing in my bedroom, which is—bed and all—that of Mary Queen of Scots, who was the prisoner of Bess of Hardwick. It is a wonderful house, indeed—enormous, and yet completely covered with the tapestry and the pictures of the time. . . . The casement windows have never been touched since Queen Elizabeth was here, and are enormous. (There is a local proverb which speaks of the hall as 'all window and no wall.') The result is that, in spite of heavy hanging curtains, the candles are blown out if you go near the windows. . . . The portrait of the first Cavendish —who was usher of Cardinal Wolsey, and who married Bess of Hardwick, the richest lady of the day—is exactly like Hartington, but a vulgar Hartington—fat and greasy—a Hartington who might have kept a public-house."

Mr. Chamberlain wrote to Sir Charles at Hardwick concerning his host:

"The true Whig tradition is to keep abreast of the movement which they would willingly restrain, and do nothing to quicken, but it is difficult for a man of Hartington's temperament to make the sacrifice of pride which these tactics require."

Mr. Chamberlain's Ipswich speech had made its mark, and Sir Charles notes 'the beginning of the terror caused by the unauthorized programme' in 'a letter which I

received from Lord Salisbury, who was at Florence, as to my draft Report of the Housing Commission.'

'Lord Salisbury had greatly changed his views since he had sketched out socialistic proposals for me in his own hand. He now complained of that which I had said on "the burning questions of expropriation, betterment, and land tenure," and thought that Chamberlain's evidence had affected the report, and that such views "must now be considered in the light of the doctrines as to land he has recently laid down."'

That letter, received on January 30th, must have been written two days earlier, and evidently at that moment there were plans of forming an administration which should exclude the Radicals.

'On January 28th Harcourt told me that he had stopped the Queen deciding to send for Goschen to form a Whig Ministry if we were beaten or if Mr. Gladstone resigned by telling her that Goschen would refuse, or that, if he consented, no one would join him.'

On January 29th, at Birmingham, Mr. Chamberlain made reply to his critics in a speech which added to the Ipswich programme manhood suffrage and payment of members, and which further declared that the sanctity of public property far exceeded that of private property. If land, for instance, had been "lost or wasted or stolen," some equivalent for it must be found, and some compensation exacted from the wrongdoers.*

These utterances from a member of the Cabinet were not likely to pass unchallenged.

'On Monday, February 2nd, Chamberlain telegraphed to me that he was coming up on the next day, Tuesday, the 3rd, on purpose to see me on an important matter; and on the morning of the 3rd I received in a secret box the letters about which he was coming. There was one from Mr. Gladstone complaining of the unauthorized programme, and

* "The ransom theory," afterwards alluded to (see Chapter XLIV., p. 182).

a draft proposed reply, and Chamberlain added: "Take them (Mr. Gladstone's letters and enclosures from the Whigs) in connection with the *Times* articles.' There is to be a dead set evidently. . . . There are three possibilities. (1) Mr. Gladstone may wish me to resign. (2) A vote of censure may be proposed in the House of Commons and carried. (3) Mr. Gladstone may defend me, and in so doing may to all intents and purposes censure me in such a way as to entail my resignation. The first would not, I think, do me any harm. The second would do me good. The third would not be pleasant. My object in proposed reply is to make Mr. G. speak more plainly, and to let me know where I stand. I have spoken in the first person because (until I see you) I have no right to assume that you will accept a joint responsibility. But I think you will, and then if we go out or are forced out there will be a devil of a row. I have been speaking to Schnadhorst to-day on the possibility. He says (you must take the opinion for what it is worth) that it would strengthen us in the country. . . . I assume Trevelyan would go with Mr. G. . . . I shall want to know what you think of it all, and whether you have any alterations to propose in the reply."

'I noted: "I, of course, make common cause. The Whigs want to force him into a row with Mr. G., who, they think, will break him in place of his breaking Hartington after Mr. G. is gone." I admitted to Chamberlain when we met on February 3rd that there was, as he said, a dead set at him, and that the *Pall Mall* for a wonder was backing it up. On his first point I was sure that Mr. Gladstone did not wish for his resignation, and knew that I should go too. On the second, I doubted any member being ready to bell the cat; and on the third point I was sure that Mr. Gladstone's defence of Chamberlain would not be such as to entail his resignation.'

Sir Charles thought, and told Chamberlain, that the object of the Whigs was to force them 'to war with Mr. G. who is strong, and not with Hartington,' against whom the Radicals would hold winning cards. "We therefore play into their hands by going NOW." Meanwhile, he took up a fighting attitude towards the rest of the world.

'I had written to Mr. Gladstone very strongly backing up Chamberlain's right to express his individual opinion upon

the questions of the future, and pointing out his patience in not repudiating some of Hartington's remarks, and saying that I could not let him go out alone.'

'On February 4th I heard from Chamberlain . . . thanking me for getting Carrington, who represented my Department in the Lords, to make a pro-Chamberlain speech.'

This was the more valuable because the whole Press was against the "unauthorized programme." At the same time, Sir Charles did not fail to point out that their position was an unsound one, writing first:

'Our words as to the future are too wide. They would cover my preaching a Republic for two years hence, or your preaching the nationalization of land without compensation for the next Parliament.'

He urged also that the precedent which Mr. Chamberlain sought to establish was two-edged.

February 5th, 'At night I gave Chamberlain a hint that some day others might turn against him that freedom of speech which he claimed as against Hartington; and he prepared a document which, under the form of standing out for full right of free speech, really yielded the whole point. He covered his retreat with great skill, and the document as corrected by me would be valuable if it could be found. I have no copy, but have memoranda which passed between us, in one of which I begged him to keep the draft with my corrections as representing our joint view, inasmuch as it might be important in the future. Chamberlain notes, in a minute which I have, his acceptance of the general doctrine, with a declaration that the present was an exceptional period; that there was a new departure under the franchise reform, that it was essential to give a general direction to the discussion, that his actual proposals were moderate, and such as only to point to, firstly, a revision of taxation which Mr. Gladstone himself had advocated, details being open, but the principle being to secure equality of sacrifice; secondly, the extension of power of local authorities on lines already conceded in Ireland.'

The two allies were fighting a hard fight at a critical moment. At such times even the closest friends naturally seek to reassure each other, and to a letter from Sir Charles Mr. Chamberlain made this reply, January 11th:

"The malice and ingenuity of men is so great that I should be afraid they would some day break our friendship if it had not victoriously stood the strain of public life for so many years. I will swear that I will never do anything knowingly to imperil it, and I hope that we are both agreed that if by any chance either of us should think that he has the slightest cause of complaint he will not keep it to himself for a day, but will have a frank explanation. In this case I shall feel safe, for I am certain that any mistake would be immediately repaired by whoever might be in fault."

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE FALL OF KHARTOUM AND THE PENJDEH INCIDENT

'On the morning of Thursday, February 5th, 1885, at 3 a.m., Brett went to Lord Granville with the news of the fall of Khartoum. He used to tell how he had been wholly unable to find the old gentleman, and how the servants had ultimately asserted that their master was at Walmer—which he was not. At the same hour the news was sold by a War Office messenger to one of the News Agencies. The resident clerk at the War Office had written to Thompson, of the War Office, in an unsealed envelope, instead of putting the despatch into a box. It did not matter much on this occasion, but it might matter in a great European war. A Cabinet was immediately summoned for the next day.* Only three subjects were discussed: Khar-

* The following correspondence between Mr. Brett (now Viscount Esher) and Sir Charles throws light on the summoning of the Cabinet:

War Office,
Thursday morning, 3 a.m.

Here is some bad news.

No Ministers in town, except you and Chamberlain!

Have tried Lord G. and Lord Northbrook. No results!

So things must take their chance. There ought to have been a Cabinet to-morrow; but suppose it is not possible.

R. B.

Please return enclosed. Will send you a copy later. Have you any suggestion to make?

You will see that W. proposes to keep this *secret*. Not possible for long in this Office.

Sir Charles Dilke to Mr. Brett.

Telegraph *to Mr. G. and Hartington to come up to-day*, and call a Cabinet for to-morrow at 11 a.m. Make Hamilton telegraph to all Ministers at once. I'm prepared to take it on myself if you like, but you can send this to Chamberlain if he agrees.

I agree certainly.—J. C.

Local Government Board,
February 5th, 1885.

It is absurd not to make them come up *to-day* in face of Wolseley's "*It is most essential that I shall have the earliest possible decision.*"

Ch. W. D.

toum, secrecy, and the question of the Italians as against the Turks in the Red Sea.'

On February 7th, 'The next matter was Wolseley, who had confused us by greatly varying his statements. . . Next came a proposal that Gordon should be bought from the Mahdi.'

'On February 9th Mr. Gladstone mentioned his intention to bring in Rosebery and Lefevre as members of the Cabinet. It was decided that the Italians should be allowed to go to Kassala—a decision which was afterwards reversed. The French views on Egyptian finance were named, the despatch of Indian troops to Suakim again discussed. Wolseley having asked that General Greaves should be sent to Suakim, Childers said that the Queen and Duke of Cambridge had stopped that officer's promotion because he "belonged to the Ashantee gang" (Wolseley's friends), and that the Duke had now complained that he did not know him. Chamberlain proposed that we should invite the Canadian Government to send a force to Suakim; and, finally, Childers was allowed to mention finance, which had been the object for which the Cabinet was called.

'On February 10th I wrote to Chamberlain that Rosebery and Lefevre would help the Cabinet with the public, but would weaken us in the Cabinet.

'On February 11th there was another Cabinet, five members being absent—namely, the Chancellor, Carlingford, Spencer, Chamberlain, and Trevelyan—owing to the suddenness of the call. It was on the Suakim command, Mr. Gladstone being very obstinate for Greaves, as against Graham with Greaves for Chief of Staff—a compromise. I supported Hartington—I do not know why—and we beat Mr. Gladstone by 5 to 4. Both officers were inferior men, and Graham did but badly. Probably Greaves would have done no better. . . .

'Mr. Gladstone complained that he and Hartington had received at Carnforth on the 5th a disagreeable telegram *en clair* from the Queen, and Mr. Gladstone was very anxious to know whether the Tories had found it out, asking anxiously, "What are the station-master's politics?"

'February 13th . . . I was with Harcourt when Rosebery came to be sworn in, so I took the opportunity of making Rosebery help us to make Lord Derby uncomfortable for proposing to refuse the troops offered by the colony of New South Wales.

'We began to discuss our Soudan policy with some anxiety.

'Courtney and Morley had insisted in private letters that we should only rescue, and not attack the rebels, and the *Times* agreed with them—unless we intended to stay in the country and establish a Government. Wolseley's policy would be represented as one of "smash and retire," and it was for this reason that Chamberlain pressed negotiations with the Mahdi, as he thought we should be stronger if we could show that the Mahdi had rejected a fair offer. It was on February 13th that Hartington most strongly pressed his proposal for the Suakim railroad, and invited me to be a member of a Cabinet Committee to consider the proposal.'

'On Monday, February 16th, the first matter discussed was the Russian answer as regards Egyptian finance. The Soudan was put off till the next day, Chamberlain making a strong speech first upon our policy. Hartington asked for five million, to include the cost of his Suakim-Berber railway, and for leave to call out reserves.

'On February 19th I had an interview with Mr. Gladstone, and found him anxious to be turned out on the vote of censure. Indeed, he was longing for it, in the firm belief that, if turned out, he would come back after the dissolution in November, while, if not turned out, he would be more likely to be beaten.

'On February 20th the subjects discussed were Egypt (Finance and Suez Canal) and the sending a colonial force to Suakim. Chamberlain had developed to Childers at the same meeting a proposal that Hartington should form a Ministry to carry on the Soudan War, with the loyal support of those of us who went out with Mr. Gladstone.

'On February 25th, Goschen having asked for assurances as to the Berber railway, Chamberlain wrote to me saying that if Hartington gave them, it might be a sufficient cause for our resignation, as we were not prepared to commit the country to establishing settled government in any part of the Soudan. Chamberlain proposed that we should resign before the division, and that the Government being beaten, there should then be brought about the establishment of what he called the combination or patriotic Government, which meant a Hartington administration. I, on the whole, preferred to go on as we were, so I stopped a box of Hartington's which was going round the Cabinet, and proposed an

alteration of form which prevented Chamberlain going out on these assurances.

'During the debate I went away to dine, and, not having heard the middle of Harcourt's speech, asked Chamberlain whether Harcourt had tried to answer any of Goschen's questions, to which Chamberlain answered, "Not one. He asked questions in turn," which is a good description of Harcourt's style. I then wrote on a slip of paper, "Forster is taking notes"; and Chamberlain replied, "Forster—against slavery, against Zebehr,* and of course generally in favour of a crusade," a note which is also characteristic—of both these men.

'At four o'clock in the morning of February 28th, when we got our majority of 14, after the first division, Mr. Gladstone, who wanted to go out, said to Childers and myself, "That will do." This was indeed a Delphic utterance.'

Sir Charles himself spoke, at Mr. Gladstone's request, at great length in the third day's debate on February 26th, but it was 'only a debating speech.'

'After we had had a sleep, we met in Cabinet on Saturday, February 28th. Lord Granville and Childers now anxious to go. Harcourt, who had at night been against going, was now anxious to go. This was a curious and interesting Cabinet. Lord Granville and Lord Derby, who were at loggerheads both with Bismarck and with their colleagues, were strong that we should resign, and they got some support from Chamberlain, Northbrook, Childers, and Hartington. Lefevre,† who had only just come in, and Trevelyan were strong for staying in, as was Carlingford; but the other members of the Cabinet either wobbled backwards and forwards, or did not care. At last it was decided by the casting vote of Mr. Gladstone, if one may use the phrase when there was no actual voting, that we should try to go on at present so as to carry the Seats Bill ourselves.

* Zebehr was arrested in Cairo on the ground of treasonable correspondence with the Mahdi, and interned at Gibraltar, but later was allowed to return to Cairo. He died in January, 1903.

† Lord Eversley, then Mr. Shaw Lefevre, had joined the Cabinet after the news from Khartoum. Lord Rosebery had accepted the Privy Seal. Lord Eversley says that on February 28th opinions were evenly divided, but that one member refused to express an opinion on the ground of his recent admission. See, too, *Life of Granville*, vol. ii., pp. 421-422.

'We then turned to the Berber railway, and decided that it should be a temporary or contractor's line made only so far as might be necessary for purely military reasons. We then decided that Wolseley should not be allowed to make himself Governor-General of the Soudan.

'After the Cabinet Chamberlain and I continued our discussion as to his strong wish to resign. I told him that I wanted to finish the Seats Bill, that I thought Lord Salisbury might refuse or make conditions with regard to coming in, that Mr. Gladstone would not lead in opposition, and that we should seem to be driving him into complete retirement, and I asked whether we were justified in running away.'

Meantime the financial business of the year had to go on, and part of it was a demand for increased naval expenditure, to which, as has been seen already, Mr. Gladstone was opposed.

'The Navy Estimates were first discussed, and then the Army, and a sum asked for for the fortification of coaling-stations was refused, and also a sum asked for for defending the home merchant ports. We all of us were guilty of unwise haste on this occasion, for the demand was right; but the chief blame must fall rather on Childers, Hartington, and the others who had been at the War Office than upon those who sinned in ignorance.'

This decision against naval expenditure was a cause of embarrassment to the Government in the country, for a strong 'big navy' campaign followed. The real question at issue in the Cabinet became that of taxation. On March 2nd, and again in April, Sir Charles 'warned Mr. Gladstone against Childers's proposed Budget'—the rock on which they finally made shipwreck. 'Mr. Gladstone replied: "The subject of your note has weighed heavily on my mind, and I shall endeavour to be prepared for our meeting." I now sent him a memorandum after consultation with Chamberlain.'

What Sir Charles wrote in 1885 is nowadays matter of common argument; it was novel then in the mouth of a practical politician:

'I stated at length that, as head of the Poor Law department, I ought to have knowledge of the pressure of taxation upon the incomes of the poor. As Chairman of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, I had had to hear a great deal of evidence upon the subject of the income of the working classes, and as Chairman of the recent Conference on Industrial Remuneration had had special opportunities of further examining the question. It was my opinion that the position of the agricultural labourers had declined, and that the Whig or Conservative minority on my Commission, represented by Mr. Goschen and Lord Brownlow, admitted this contention of mine as regarded the south of England. The labourers of the south were unable to procure milk, and relied largely on beer as an article of food. Their wages had but slightly increased in the twenty years since 1865, and had decreased considerably since 1879. Food had slightly risen in price, clothes were nominally cheaper, but the same amount of wear for the money was not obtainable, and house rent (where house rent was paid by the labourers) had greatly risen. An enormous proportion of the income of the rich escaped taxation: fifty millions a year of their foreign income at the least. The uncertainty of employment placed the labourer even lower as a partaker in the income of the country than the statisticians placed him. The calculations of employers, upon which the estimates of statisticians were based, were founded upon the higher earnings of the best workers; and when the matter was examined, it was found that variation of wages, loss of time, and failure of work, much lowered the average earnings. The taxation of the working classes rose to a higher percentage than that of the upper and middle classes. Mr. Dudley Baxter, who was a Conservative, had admitted this, and had advocated a reduction in the tobacco duty and the malt tax. Since that time the tobacco duty had been raised, and the duties pressing upon beer had been rather raised than lowered.'

Sir Charles's insistence upon this matter is all the more notable because foreign complications were rapidly accumulating, and they were of a gravity which might well have seemed to dwarf all questions of the incidence of taxation.

There were not only the difficulties with Germany. There was also the Soudan, where a large body of British troops was engaged, in a country the perils of which England had now to realize.

'On March 7th there was a Cabinet as to the Suakim-Berber railway. Northbrook and I, soon joined by Harcourt and Chamberlain, were in favour of stopping our impossible campaign. I argued that when we decided to destroy the power of the Mahdi, it was on Wolseley's telling us that he hoped possibly to take Khartoum at once. For some weeks after that he had intended to take Berber. Then he had told us that he at least could occupy Abu Hamed. Now he was in full retreat, and both his lines of supply—namely, that up the Nile and that from Suakim—seemed equally difficult. The Chancellor wrote on a slip of paper for me: "We seem to be fighting three enemies at once. (1) The Mahdi; (2) certain of our people here; (3) Wolseley." Nothing was settled, and we passed on to Egyptian finance.'

March 11th, 'In the evening a despatch was circulated in which Wolseley said: "Please tell Lord Granville that I cannot wait any longer, and I must issue proclamation, and will do so on my own authority if I do not receive answer to this by the 14th. I hope I may be allowed to issue it as Governor-General."

'I at once wrote, "I understood that we had *decided* that he was not to be Governor-General, and that the proclamation should not be issued in the terms proposed"; on which Lord Granville wrote, "Yes. Cabinet to-morrow.—G."

'On Thursday, March 12th, the first matter discussed was that of the arrest of Zebehr. Then came Wolseley's proclamation, which was vetoed. We decided that he should not be allowed to make himself Governor-General of the Soudan.'

It now seemed more than likely that the British Government would have work on its hands which would render the employment of an army in the Soudan very undesirable; for more serious than the Mahdi's movements on the Nile, more serious than the operations of German Admirals in the Pacific, was the menace of a Russian advance upon Afghanistan.

Arrangements had been made for the demarcation of the Afghan frontier which Sir Charles had persistently urged. A British Commissioner had been appointed in July, 1884, but at the end of the following November Russia was still parleying on questions of detail. These, however, seemed to have been at length resolved; and in January, 1885,

the British Commissioner was waiting in the neighbourhood of Herat for the Russian Commissioners to join in the work of fixing the boundaries. But the Russians did not appear; they were, says Sir Charles, 'intriguing at Penjdeh, and preparing for the blow which later on they struck against the Afghans.' The Amir evidently felt this, for he renewed the proposal that he should pay a state visit to the Viceroy, and on January 23rd Dilke wrote to Grant Duff that this had been accepted.

February 4th, 'On this day I received a letter rom Sir Robert Sandeman at Quetta, in which he thanked me for the assistance that I had given him in the retention of Sibi, Pishin, and the Khojak. "It was greatly due to your support of my representations on the subject that our influence on this frontier is at present all-powerful."'

On February 5th, a few hours after the fall of Khartoum was published,

'there was a meeting of Ministers as to Central Asia. We decided on a reply to Russia drawn up by myself and Kimberley, Lord Granville and Northbrook somewhat dissenting, and Fitzmaurice and Philip Currie taking no part.

'On February 18th we had a meeting of the Central Asia Committee at the Foreign Office with regard to the Russian advance in the direction of Penjdeh, Lord Granville, Hartington, Northbrook, Kimberley, myself, Fitzmaurice, and Currie. We ordered Sir Peter Lumsden' (Chief of the Boundary Commission), 'in the event of a Russian advance on Herat, to throw himself and escort into that city, and to aid the Afghan defence.'

On March 12th, after deciding to limit Lord Wolseley's schemes in the Soudan, 'we took a decision that war preparations against Russia should be made in India.'

'On the 20th we decided that if the Russians continued to advance, 20,000 troops should be concentrated at Quetta. We next gave instructions to Lord Dufferin with regard to what he was to say to the Amir of Afghanistan at the interview which was about to take place between them, and authorized him to renew our guarantee. There was either a regular or irregular Cabinet on March 24th. We decided that if the Russians advanced upon Herat, the

advance should be treated as a *casus belli*, and orders to this effect were sent to Dufferin. At the meeting on April 2nd the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, assured the Amir in the presence of his Prime Minister, of Mr. Durand, and of Captain Talbot, "that a Russian advance on Herat should be met by war all over the world."'

'On April 8th, in public durbar, the Amir, without contradiction from Lord Dufferin, said: "The British Government has declared it will assist me in repelling any foreign enemy."'

Sir Charles was now discussing by letter with Sir Frederick Roberts the proposals which were preferred by the Defence Committee in India for the defence of the North-West Frontier, with special emphasis on the further question whether there was any point at which England could strike at Russia.*

Early in April sittings of the Housing Commission in Scotland occasioned Dilke's absence from a Cabinet at which important phases of the Central Asian question were discussed.

April 4th, 'Chamberlain wrote to me an account of all that passed, pointing out that the Russian answer bade us "give up everything, and they offer us absolutely nothing by way of concession in return. This attitude really leaves us no alternative. I am very uncomfortable about it, because the more I study the matter the more I think that the Russians are right both in form and in substance—*i.e.*, they have the pretexts on their side, and they also have a strong argument in favour of their line, both on the matter of territorial right, and also on the ground that this line is the only one which insures any chance of permanent peace. But we cannot have the pill forced down our throats by Russia without inquiry, or discussion on equal terms. . . . Harcourt declares that we have 'closed the door of Peace and opened the door of War.' The only difference between us is that he is inclined to accept the alternative of the Russian zone which has been already refused, and as to which the present Note says in effect that, though they are ready to go back to this zone, yet it will be of no use, as they are determined in the end to stick to their line."'

* See Appendix following on this chapter, pp. 122, 123.

'On Thursday, April 9th, there was a Cabinet, which I also missed, and which considered the conflict at Penjdeh.'*

Every day now had its Cabinet. On April 11th, 13th, and 14th evacuation of the Soudan was discussed, but Lord Hartington, by a threat of resignation, secured repeated postponements.

'This question was mixed up by some members of the Cabinet with that of Afghanistan, inasmuch as they said that we could not fight Russia in Afghanistan, and go on in the Soudan as well; upon which Mr. Gladstone said of the Soudan, "I am not prepared to go on upon any terms, Russia or no Russia."'

A new trouble was added when the Egyptian Government suppressed the *Bosphore Égyptien*, a local paper published in French, and closed the printing office. Against this the French protested, and in the course of the quarrel actually broke off diplomatic relations with the Egyptian Government, which, considering the relations between that Ministry and the protecting force of Great Britain, pushed unfriendliness very far. Ultimately the *Bosphore* was allowed to appear and to print what it chose, until it died a natural death.

'On Monday, April 13th, came a proposal from the Russian Ambassador, made through Lefevre and Brett, but which was really from Stead; Brett meaning Stead. Curiously enough, it was a proposal of Chamberlain's, of which he had previously told us, which had come back to him in this way. Chamberlain consulted me as to whether he should tell Mr. Gladstone that it was his, and I told him that I thought he had better not, as I thought it was more likely to be successful as coming from the Russian Ambassador and Stead than as coming from him. It virtually amounted to the plan of Arbitration which was ultimately adopted, although as a fact the Arbitration never took place.'

'On Wednesday, 15th, there was an informal Cabinet, at which I was not present, because the Seats Bill was in Committee in the House at the same time. A form of words with regard to the Soudan was agreed upon which united Hartington with the others.'

* On March 20th, General Komarof with a Russian force had attacked and routed an Afghan army in the valley of Penjdeh.

'On Thursday, the 16th, Mr. Gladstone misinformed the House of Commons—the inevitable result from time to time of his habit of answering without notice questions upon dangerous subjects. A meeting had taken place between Lord Granville, Kimberley, and Philip Currie on our side, and Staal, the Russian Ambassador, and Lessar, the Russian expert, at which Lord Granville showed that we meant to let Penjdeh go. Lessar paid a newspaper for its support by telling them. Mr. Gladstone was asked, and replied that he knew nothing about the matter, while he suggested that Penjdeh was not to be given up.'

'On the 18th the Queen agreed to retirement from the Soudan, with reservation of future liberty of action.' Whatever happened about Penjdeh, it was certain that resistance would be offered to Russia. 'On this day, Monday, April 20th, there was a Cabinet, at which it was decided to ask for eleven millions in the vote of credit. We then discussed Lumsden's despatch of explanation as to the Penjdeh incident, which we decided should be published. The vote of credit was really partly for Russia and partly for the Soudan, and a question arose whether it should be proposed as one or as two, and we decided for one. After which we went back again to the Budget, and the minority proposed a penny increase on the income tax as against the increase on beer, after which the Budget was adjourned to April 30th, it being decided then that the vote of credit should be taken first.'

'On April 20th I received from the Communalist General Cluseret a long letter in which he offered, on the ground of his profound sympathy, his services to England against Russia in the event of war—a document which would have done him little good had it seen the light when he afterwards stood successfully for my electoral division in the Var, at a time when French sympathy for Russia was predominant.

'On Tuesday, April 21st, after the Cabinet, I had told Mr. Gladstone that I could not agree to the increase of the taxation on beer, and Mr. Gladstone wrote to me twice on that day about the matter. I was not very sure of Harcourt standing by us, and knew that the pressure was great, inasmuch as, in addition to the two letters from Mr. Gladstone, I received one from Edward Hamilton, also dated the 21st, in which he made the strongest appeal to me on personal grounds not to worry Mr. Gladstone by resignations. He said that Mr. Gladstone was over-

burdened, and that it would take very little to break him down. Edward Hamilton wrote: "It is a peculiarity of his . . . that, while he can stand the strain of a grave political crisis such as a question involving peace or war, he succumbs to the strain of a personal question. . . . Mr. Gladstone, I know, feels that any secession, especially of one who has a reputation not confined to this country, would necessarily weaken greatly the Government, and from a national point of view this is of all times a moment when there ought to be a strong Government which can confront Europe and face the varied difficulties. No one would more gladly escape from office than Mr. G. himself; but the more attractive is the prospect of freedom, the less does he dare allow himself to contemplate it."'

Mr. Gladstone wrote saying that such a secession at such a time would be serious for the Government, but also, he thought, serious for the seceder, and Sir Charles replied:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD,
WHITEHALL,
April 21*st*, 1885.

'I should always let the consideration of what was due to my friends weigh with me as much as any man, I feel sure, and I am also certain that considerations of personal loyalty to yourself are as strong with me now as they are with any member of the Cabinet. I should never let the other class of considerations—*i.e.*, those personal to myself—weigh with me at all. Because I am fond of work I am supposed to be ambitious; but I fancy few politicians are less so, and I do not mind unpopularity, which, after all, generally rights itself in the course of years. I knew that this matter would be a very serious one before I went into it, and I should not have said what I did had I not felt forced to do so.

'If others go with me, the extent of our unpopularity and consequent loss of future usefulness will depend on our own conduct, and if we do our duty by firmly supporting the Government through its foreign and general difficulties, I do not think that even the party will be ungenerous to us.'

But Sir Charles finally yielded, and drove a bargain.

'On April 24th I had decided at Chamberlain's strong wish to yield to Childers as to the beer duty; Childers promising in return to take the Princess Beatrice Committee of Inquiry demand upon himself.

'May 9th, the Queen now wished for immediate inquiry —that is, in other words, preferred the Parliament she knew to the new Parliament. The Government proposed "next year." It was agreed that the Government were to guide the Committee whenever it might sit, and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should be in the Chair.

'Mr. Gladstone wrote me a letter to ease off my surrender on beer duties, by pointing out the importance of the proposals which were being made to put realty in the same position as personalty as to Death Duties. "This must in all likelihood lead to a very serious struggle with the Tories, for it strikes at the very heart of class-preference, which is the central point of what I call the lower and what is now the prevalent Toryism." '

In the great debate of April 27th, in which Mr. Gladstone proposed a vote of credit for eleven millions, of which six and a half were for war preparation in view of the collision between the Afghans and Russians at Penjdeh,

'Mr. Gladstone made perhaps the most remarkable speech that even he ever delivered, and I have his notes for it with a map I drew for him before he spoke, to show him the position of the various places.* At this time I wrote to Hartington to suggest that if we were forced into war with Russia we should attack the Russians at Vladivostock, and the Intelligence Department wrote a memorandum upon the subject. I also sent round a paper pointing out that we should fight at the greatest advantage from a Pacific base, that the help of China would be of moment, and that Chinese troops drilled and officered by Englishmen would be irresistible; and Northbrook strongly backed me up. Lumsden was sending us most violent telegrams, and while I was preparing for war I was also asking for the recall of Lumsden in favour of Colonel Stewart. Lord Granville wrote: "Lumsden was a bad appointment, and I for a moment wished to recall him. But it would be condemned here as an immense knock-under."† I also suggested that the engineers for whom the Amir had asked should be carefully picked, and should have a private Indian allowance for keeping us informed of what

* On this speech see the *Life of Gladstone*, vol. iii., p. 184; *Life of Granville*, vol. ii., p. 440.

† See the *Life of Granville*, vol. ii., pp. 441, 442.

passed at Kabul, and Lord Granville conveyed the suggestion by telegraph to Lord Dufferin. (This was afterwards done.)'

Russia unexpectedly withdrew.

'On May 2nd there was a sudden Cabinet on the Russian acceptance of arbitration, Harcourt, Chamberlain, and Carlingford being absent. Kimberley, the Chancellor, Northbrook, Derby, and I were for immediate acceptance of the offer; Hartington against; Lord Granville for amiably getting out of it; Trevelyan and Lefevre silent; Rosebery late. Mr. Gladstone at first sided with Lord Granville, then came half way to us, and then proposed that we should wait a bit till Condie Stephen reached us. I replied by showing that Condie Stephen was a Jingo, the friend of Drummond Wolff and of Bowles of *Vanity Fair*, and would make things worse. Then Mr. Gladstone came completely to our side. Childers drew up in Cabinet the form for the declaration as to the Select Committee on the Civil List, and I agreed to it. I wrote what had passed to Chamberlain, who was at Birmingham, and he replied on the next day that he trusted that the information about Russia would be immediately communicated to the House, and went on: "But, then, what becomes of the vote of credit and the Budget? It seems cheeky to ask for 6½ millions of Preparations when the matter is practically settled."

'On May 7th the Herat boundary was discussed and a line settled, and it was decided that either the German Emperor or the King of Denmark should be named as the Arbitrator about Penjdeh.' Later, 'There was a meeting of the Commons Ministers to discuss the situation created by the refusal by Russia of the German Emperor as Arbitrator, the Queen having previously refused the King of Denmark. The Queen had ultimately to yield. But, as I have said, the arbitration, although agreed on, never took place at all.'

The demarcation of frontier for which Sir Charles had so long contended was carried through without any marked incident, largely owing to the skill of Sir J. West Ridgeway, who had succeeded Sir Peter Lumsden.

APPENDIX

The Memoir gives the following account of the proposals made for defence of the North-West Frontier in India in the spring of 1885, and some observations arising from them:

'The general idea was to hold the northern route by an entrenched position, and, as regards the southern or flank road, to fortify the mountains before Quetta. Roads and railways were to be made for concentration in the direction of Kandahar, and Sir Frederick Roberts afterwards very wisely noted, "It is impossible to threaten Russia's base, but we should do all in our power to keep it as far away as possible." Unfortunately, Sir Frederick Roberts afterwards forgot this, and suggested the possibility of advance upon Herat with the view to attack Russia at her Sarakhs base. The suggestions made in 1885 with regard to Kashmir and the Gomul Pass were acted upon in 1890. Sir Donald Stewart, however, went on to recommend a railway extension from Peshawur towards Kabul, and Sir Frederick Roberts, with greater judgment, on succeeding him, vetoed this scheme. Lord Kitchener revived it, but was not allowed to complete his work. Sir Donald Stewart's committee recommended the tunnel at the Khojak, which was carried out. Roberts reported against it, and he was right.

'On the whole, when Sir Frederick Roberts sent me his view on the defence proposals, I was struck with the contrast between the completeness of the manner in which a defence scheme for India has been considered, and the incompleteness, to say the least of it, of all strategic plans at home. Sir Charles Macgregor put on record at the same time his view that a mere offensive on the North-West Frontier of India would be folly, if not madness, and that it would be necessary also to undertake offensive operations against Russia. Quite so, according to all rules of war, and if ultimate defeat is to be avoided. Unfortunately, however, it is not easy to attack Russia, and the proposals made by Sir Charles Macgregor would not bear investigation. Sir Frederick Roberts himself afterwards tried his hand at proposals of his own in a Memorandum entitled, "What are Russia's vulnerable points?" But I do not know that he was more successful, and I fear that his first question, "Has Russia any vulnerable points?" must, if we are looking to permanency, and not to merely temporary measures, be

answered in the negative, except as regards Vladivostock—a case I put. After much correspondence with me on this last memorandum, Sir Frederick Roberts quoted me, without naming me, as having, to his regret, informed him that English public opinion would oppose a Turkish alliance, that a Turkish alliance would not be of much use if we could obtain it, and that apart even from these considerations we could not obtain it if we wished.'

The importance which Sir Charles attached to Vladivostock, as the vulnerable point at which Russia could be attacked in time of war, explains his regret when Port Hamilton, which threatened Vladivostock, was abandoned.*

'*May*, 1885.—The Port Hamilton matter began about this time. We had seized it, and, as Northbrook and I agreed, "for naval reasons we ought to keep it." Northbrook also wrote that he was laying a cable from Shanghai to Port Hamilton, which he thought a most important precaution in time of war; but Port Hamilton was afterwards given up because the sailors found it dull—an insufficient reason.'

* See *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii., p. 440; and *Europe and the Far East*, by Sir Robert K. Douglas, pp. 190, 248, 249.

CHAPTER XL

REDISTRIBUTION COERCION AND DEVOLUTION

1885

I.

The year 1885 saw the Seats Bill, with its numerous compromises in detail, passed into law, but not without attendant difficulties.

'On Ash Wednesday, February 18th, I saw Sir Stafford Northcote, and settled with him, in view of the meeting of the House on the next day, the whole course of affairs for the 19th and 20th, under guise of discussing details of the Seats Bill. After we had parted, Northcote wrote to me that on consideration he had come to the conclusion that he must give notice of a vote of censure, but our amicable communication continued on the next day. "On consideration," with Northcote, always meant "After bullying by Randolph."'

In the process of settlement there were constant meetings with Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote together, with Lord John Manners, with Sir Michael Hicks Beach; while on the Conservative scheme for Irish grouping

'I saw Healy for them, to discover if the thing could be done by general consent; and, although Healy did not oppose right out, the prospect of an agreement on details was far from promising. Healy and I took the opportunity to discuss the Parnell-Chamberlain Irish National Board scheme, of which I had written to Grant Duff on January 23rd, "Chamberlain has a grand scheme for an Irish Board."'

March 6th.—'Healy having told me that he was sure Lord Salisbury had "rigged" the Irish Boundary Commission, and I having written this to Spencer, I received an indignant

denial. "If indignation were justified at anything that Healy says, I should indignantly deny his accusation." '

'Between March 11th and 13th the Conservatives had given me a good deal of trouble by trying, under pressure from their friends, to vary the Seats Agreement upon several points. . . . They then attacked the two-member towns in England, which, it may be remembered, had been insisted on by Mr. Gladstone against my wish; and Northcote wrote: "Lord Salisbury and I never liked that *privilegium*, and wished to have single-member constituencies everywhere"; he tried hard to get me to reopen the question, knowing doubtless that I was with him on the merits. He continued to press the question as late as March 15th, when he wrote: "Our men are getting hard to hold, and, having twice walked through the lobby almost alone, I have no taste for repeating the operation." Conference with Lord Salisbury followed, and the final stages were reached: 'from Monday, March 23rd, I had the Seats Bill in Committee four days a week.'

The essential fact in these dealings is that emphasized by Mr. Howel Thomas, Secretary to the Boundary Commission:

"No political or other pressure would induce Sir Charles —and the strongest pressure was used again and again— even to contemplate a departure from the spirit of the compact. When once an agreement became possible, he would spare no trouble to modify details. But without agreement, however strong the argument for a change, nothing was listened to."

'On May 6th I received from Sir John Lambert, the retired Permanent Secretary of the Local Government Board, a most grateful letter about the Privy Councillorship, which had been announced to him by Mr. Gladstone, and which no man ever more greatly deserved as an honour, or by his character more greatly honoured.'*

'On the morning of May 9th I received a letter from Northcote, congratulating me on the manner in which I had conducted the Redistribution Bill "through its difficult stages. . . . Let me thank you once more for the great consideration, as well as the perfect loyalty, with which you

* Sir John Lambert's letter to Sir Charles contained these words: "I have had the opportunity of assisting you in a work which has placed you in the very foremost rank of statesmen, and I have formed a friendship which is one of the most gratifying incidents of my declining years."

have dealt with the numerous questions, and congratulate you on having brought your ship so well into port.'' '*

But "port" was not finally reached till after the fall of the Ministry in June.

Work on the Housing Commission was also practically completed. Throughout the year the Report had been under discussion.

On February 16th 'I told Chamberlain that the Labourers' Ireland Committee had "advised taking of land under compulsory powers in order to attach it to cottages"—a proposal which was afterwards carried; to which Chamberlain replied: "And your Commission?" and I answered: "We *shall*, I hope, but Lord Salisbury is jibbing since your speeches" (on the unauthorized programme).

'On March 11th, at the meeting of my Housing Commission, Lord Salisbury proposed what Goschen at once described as "Revolution," and Broadhurst "Socialism." He wanted to give public money out of taxes to London. It may have been silly, but it was not either revolutionary or socialistic.'

When it came to the point of acting on the Report, the Tory leader was very far from revolutionary; on June 4th,

'I was also seeing Lord Salisbury as to the Housing Commission Bills, which he was to introduce into the House of Lords.† He was strongly opposed to putting it into the power of Boards of Guardians "to build out of the rates as many cottages, with half-acres attached, as they like, taking for the purpose any land they please." In another letter he wrote: "I should provide that—(1) The Local Authority must pass a petition to the Local Government Board to

* Upon a table in the larger drawing-room at 76, Sloane Street there stood always a bronze "Victory" sent by Sir George Trevelyan to Sir Charles to celebrate the passing of the Redistribution Bill, with these words:

"DEAR DILKE,—The bronze is a Victory on a globe. The Victory is obvious. The globe below signifies the manner in which your conduct of the Redistribution Bill got the Tory Press under your feet. I am pleased to think that, as a work of art, it may pass muster even before such an artist as the future Lady Dilke. . . . It is a copy of a Herculaneum bronze. . . . I cannot help hoping that you will think it not unworthy of the event which it is meant to commemorate."

† Sir Charles was to take charge of the measures in the Commons.

apply the Acts. (2) The Local Government Board must send down and inquire with a long notice. (3) If the Local Government Board inspector reports (i.) that the poorer classes of the parish are not, and are not likely to be, sufficiently housed without the application of the Acts; (ii.) that the Acts can be applied without ultimate loss to the ratepayers, then a vote of the local authorities should be sufficient to apply the Acts. It would be better that a sufficient interval should be passed in these processes to insure that the second vote should be given by a newly elected local authority." '

On April 4th to 9th the Housing Commission visited Scotland.

'On the evening of April 4th I dined with the Lord Provost of Edinburgh. On Easter Day I attended the Kirk with the Lord Provost, hearing a magnificent sermon by Principal Caird, and in the evening dined with the Lord Advocate. On Easter Tuesday I dined with the Convention of Royal Burghs. On Thursday, April 9th, we left Edinburgh for London.'

There remained only the question of inquiring and reporting with regard to Ireland, and here perplexities abounded.

As far back as February 7th at the Cabinet, 'the third matter discussed was that of the proposed visit of the Prince of Wales to Dublin as a member of my Commission, or, by himself, in advance of the visit of the Commission. It was decided that Parliament could not be asked for his expenses without trouble with the Irish.'

April 9th.—'I now began discussing with Spencer the conditions on which the Commission was to appear at Dublin, with regard to which there were great difficulties. Gray was on the Commission, but could not be Spencer's guest in any way, although, on the other hand, he and his friends were willing to receive me in spite of my being a member of the Government.* Spencer, in inviting me to stay with him, wrote: "I do not think you will fear the denunciation of *United Ireland*."

'On April 17th I entered in my diary, after the meeting of the Royal Commission at which we signed our report: "Pleasures of Ireland. If we stay with Spencer, the Irish witnesses say that they will not appear before the Commis-

* Mr. Dwyer Gray, Nationalist member for Carlow in 1885. In 1886 he represented St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

sion; and if we do not, I am told that the 'loyalists' will not appear." On this day I wrote to Grant Duff: "I may go" (out) "with Chamberlain over Budget* or over Irish Coercion." He replied, and my rejoinder will be found below.'†

Trouble had arisen also over Mr. Childers's wish to increase the duty on sparkling wines. This Sir Charles strongly opposed

'on the ground that it would upset the French and make them withdraw the most favoured nation treatment which I had won, and the matter was adjourned.'

'On Saturday, May 16th, there was another Cabinet. Childers proposed to raise the wine duties, to reduce by one-half his proposed increase on spirits, and to limit to one year his increase on beer. We all agreed, against Childers, to postpone any announcement of changes for three weeks, and Childers, thinking that this meant that we had agreed not to take his proposals, said that he would resign.'

April 24th.—'I had now received Spencer's consent to my quitting the Viceregal Lodge, when at Dublin at Whitsuntide, for one evening, to attend a party at Gray's, which was the virtual condition of our not being boycotted by the Nationalists.'

Negotiations between the Irish party and both English parties were at this time in the air, and it will be seen that this visit to Ireland became connected with political issues quite different from its ostensible and non-controversial object.

II.

Early in 1885 anti-Irish feeling, which to some extent had been allayed, was again roused by dynamite outrages. One bomb was exploded in the Tower of London, and two in the precincts of Parliament. The general temper may be judged by an entry of February 7th:

'I remonstrated with Harcourt as to the restrictions at the House, which he and the Speaker had agreed on, so far

* Correspondence with Mr. Gladstone on the Budget and the Beer Tax has been given in the previous chapter, pp. 118-120.

† Sir Charles's summary of this letter will be found in this chapter (p. 143).

as they affected the Press. I said that it was ridiculous to shut out little Lucy, the "Toby" of *Punch*, and Harcourt gravely assured me that Lucy was a man who would willingly bring dynamite into the House himself; after which I had no more to say.'

It was in face of this feeling that Mr. Chamberlain had drafted a scheme giving very large powers of self-government to an Irish popularly elected body.

When Sir Charles was declaring for resignation, he received a communication which made the Irish matter pressing.

'On April 22nd Cardinal Manning wrote to me that he had some information of importance which he wished for an opportunity of making known to me, and he begged me to come to him on my way to Whitehall on the morrow. I had to see Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote as to the Seats Bill, and it was not until the afternoon that I was able to see the Cardinal. He spoke in the name of Croke and another Roman Catholic Irish Archbishop, and of five Irish Roman Catholic Bishops who had been staying with him, the latter being a deputation of five to Rome who represented "the 14 Bishops." He said that Croke had become frightened of the extreme Nationalists. The Cardinal declared that the Roman Catholic clergy were ready to pacify Ireland if we would pass Chamberlain's Local Government Ireland Scheme, with a Central Board such as Chamberlain proposed. The Bishops and clergy would be prepared to denounce, not only separation, but also an Irish Parliament. I had reason to know that Lord Spencer was unfavourable to any negotiation with Cardinal Manning, but on the 24th, having that day again seen Manning, who put the dots on the "i's" and volunteered that if the Irish Bishops got the elective board for Ireland they would denounce as revolutionary an Irish Parliament, I wrote to Mr. Gladstone stating Manning's views, and suggesting that Chamberlain should see the Cardinal on the morrow.*

'I said in my letter to Mr. Gladstone: "I knew that the Pope, in sending for the Bishops to Rome, had acted on Manning's advice. I also knew that Manning bitterly

* See the next two pages, where accounts of these interviews and correspondence occur.

resented Errington's visits to Rome. This was all I knew on the subject until to-day, when Manning suddenly proposed to me to bring about peace and good-will in Ireland on the basis of Chamberlain's Local Government and Central Board Scheme. . . . Manning has got a pledge from the Roman Catholic Bishops, including even Archbishop Croke . . . and from Davitt, to denounce separation. He has got from the Bishops, including Croke, a declaration against an Irish Parliament, provided they obtain the Local Government Central Board. I suggested that he should see Chamberlain at once, and learn secretly the details of his proposals. He said nothing of coercion, and I, of course, avoided the subject, as I did not know whether a coercion Bill is to be proposed. I should suggest that Manning be encouraged to let the Pope have Chamberlain's scheme."

'I sent this memorandum to Chamberlain and to Lord Spencer, as well as to Mr. Gladstone, and Chamberlain wrote: "I am quite willing to call on the Cardinal if Mr. Gladstone approves." Lord Spencer wrote: "The question of Mr. Chamberlain's seeing the Cardinal with a view of his scheme being made known to the Pope is for Mr. Gladstone's decision, but I would venture to say that he should not disclose his plan to the Cardinal unless the Cabinet agree to it." This last memorandum from Lord Spencer is dated the 25th, but on the 24th Chamberlain, Mr. Gladstone having consented, had seen the Cardinal. I also saw the Cardinal again on the 25th, and he told me that in his opinion it was essential that Dr. Walsh should be made Archbishop of Dublin. He also told me that he was going to see Parnell on the Chamberlain scheme. On April 30th the Cardinal saw Parnell, and told him that the Bishops would support Chamberlain in the Local Government of Ireland scheme. Parnell promised that he would support it, and would not obstruct the Crimes Bill. So O'Shea told me, and showed me a paper unsigned, which purported to be, and which, knowing the hand, I believe was, Parnell's writing, somewhat to this effect. On the 28th a Committee of the Cabinet had been appointed on Chamberlain's Irish Local Government and Central Council scheme. On May 1st the Cardinal told me of his interview with Parnell, and of a more completely satisfactory interview between himself and Sexton.

'The scheme was one which proposed the establishment in Ireland of a national elective Council, to which were to be

referred matters at present in the hands of some four Boards at Dublin Castle. Mr. Gladstone's consent to Chamberlain's interview with the Cardinal had been given in conversation at the House of Commons on the 23rd, and I have a letter from Mr. Gladstone stating this. I had probably, for some reason which I forget, both written and spoken to him after my first interview with Manning on the 22nd, and put the matter again in a letter (possibly to go to Spencer) on the 24th. I have also a letter from Chamberlain on the 24th, saying that his interview with Manning "quite confirms your minute, and the position is hopeful." With regard to the Cardinal's insisting upon Walsh, and his anger at Errington's interference, I had a letter which I sent to Lord Spencer, and which he kept, but returned my minute referring to the Cardinal's letter, endorsed only "S. 25-4-85." Chamberlain also wrote on the same day, again stating that his interview with the Cardinal had been highly satisfactory, and adding: "Do not let Mr. Errington meddle with the Archbishopric of Dublin." On April 26th the Cardinal had again written to me about the Errington business and the See of Dublin, and this second letter on the subject I kept. The only new point in it was that contained in the following phrase: "I have an impression that efforts have been made to represent Dr. Walsh as a Nationalist. He is not more so than I am; and whether that is excessive or obstructive you will judge."

'On Tuesday, April 28th, the Cardinal again spoke to me as to the archbishopric, expressing his great vexation as to Spencer's action through Errington. I sent a minute to Spencer which he returned, writing, with regard to Manning's moderate opinions: "I wish it may be so. Responsibility does wonders. Maynooth is so bad that the Pope is now discussing it with the Bishops." Dr. Walsh, Manning's candidate, was President of Maynooth. I sent Spencer's minute to Chamberlain, who returned it with a strong minute of his own for Spencer, who again wrote: "H.E. the Cardinal is wrong in his estimate of Dr. Walsh." On April 30th Manning wrote mentioning a further conversation with Parnell, and adding: "The result is that I strongly advise the prompt introduction of the scheme I have in writing. It cannot be known too soon. But both on general and on particular reasons I hope that neither you nor your friend will dream of the act you spoke of. Government are pledged in their first Queen's Speech to county government in Ireland. Let them redeem their pledge. All

the rest will follow." The "act," of course, was resignation.'

'At the Cabinet Committee of May 1st on Ireland, Carlingford and Harcourt, in Spencer's interest, violently attacked Chamberlain's scheme; Hartington less violently; Childers, Lefevre, and Trevelyan supported. Spencer seeming to waver, Harcourt rather turned round, and Mr. Gladstone afterwards told Chamberlain that Carlingford's opposition did not matter.

'On May 1st I again saw Manning, who told me of further interviews with Parnell and Sexton. I noted in my diary: "2nd to 6th. The Irish row—Mr. Gladstone between Chamberlain and Spencer: the deep sea and the devil, or the devil and the deep sea—continues."

'On May 7th the Cardinal wrote: "How can the *Standard* have got the Irish scheme? Nothing is secret and nobody is safe. My copy of it is both safe and secret." On May 8th I wrote to Grant Duff: "Chamberlain and I have a big Irish Local Government scheme on hand, which is backed by the R. C. Bishops—which may either pacify Ireland or break up the Government." On the 9th, Harcourt having come over, Chamberlain's scheme received the support of all the Commoners except Hartington, and was opposed by all the peers except Lord Granville. Mr. Gladstone said to me in leaving the room: "Within six years, if it pleases God to spare their lives, they will be repenting in ashes." At night he wrote to Lord Spencer and to Hartington that he intended to go out upon this question.

'During Sunday, May 10th, Harcourt tried hard to patch matters up on the basis of "No Home Rule, no coercion, no remedial legislation, no Ireland at all."'

On May 13th 'Cardinal Manning dined with me, and we further discussed the position of Chamberlain's scheme.'

Then suddenly a new and complicating factor was introduced:

'On Friday, May 15th, there was another Cabinet, from which Trevelyan was absent through illness. A Land Purchase Ireland Bill was suddenly presented to us, to which I expressed strong opposition, unless it were to be accompanied by "Chamberlain's Local Government scheme"; and a Coercion Bill was also presented to us, against which Chamberlain, Lefevre, and I, protested. We,

however, declared that we would yield as regards some points in the Coercion Bill provided the Land Purchase Bill were dropped or the "Local Government measure" introduced.*

'On Sunday, May 17th, I dined with Edward Levy Lawson,† and met the Prince of Wales and Randolph Churchill; and Randolph told the Prince and myself that which he had previously told the Irish members—namely, that Salisbury had promised to have no coercion; but I noted in my diary that I did not believe this. I was wrong, for Salisbury afterwards said at Newport that his mind had been made up against coercion long before the change of Government. I knew that Randolph had seen Parnell, as I had twice seen them together in Gosset's room, which only Randolph and I ever used before 5 p.m.'

There were now two separate subjects of division leading to resignations in the Cabinet. There were those who would resign unless coercion was renewed, and there was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was resigning because he could not get his way as to the Budget. His resignation was "suspended"; but Mr. Gladstone was evidently anxious to be out of it all.

'On the Sunday Childers informed us that he would go on for three weeks. On Wednesday afternoon, May 20th, Mr. Gladstone spoke to me at the House, and told me that he would go on until the end of the Session, and would then resign, and that Hartington would try to form a Govern-

* A Land Purchase Bill had been proposed in the end of April, 1884, by Lord Spencer, which after preliminary consideration by a Committee was discussed in Cabinet.

'I opposed the whole thing. Lord Derby gave five reasons against it, all five unanswerable, and then supported it. Northbrook agreed with me. Childers, supported by a unanimous Cabinet committee, proposed a scheme of Chamberlain's suggestion for advancing the whole purchase money. Spencer proposed three-fourths. Mr. Gladstone had a scheme of his own which nobody could understand. Spencer insisted on counting heads. Lord Granville, who would, of course, have supported Mr. Gladstone, had gone away. Trevelyan, who had been called in, was not allowed to vote, and the result was that the majority pronounced against Chamberlain's scheme; Spencer who was for three-fourths, and I against the whole thing, voting together with Carlingford, Northbrook, the Chancellor, Hartington, and Dodson—a scratch lot—against Mr. Gladstone, Childers, Harcourt, Kimberley, Derby, and Chamberlain.'

† Afterwards the first Lord Burnham.

ment, although he might fail in getting one that could agree on Irish proposals. Mr. Gladstone said nothing about land purchase, but in the course of the afternoon he suddenly announced publicly the introduction of a Land Purchase Bill, thinking, I believe, that he had Chamberlain's consent to a Bill limited to one year. I at once wrote him a letter of resignation, and then sent off for Chamberlain, Lefevre, and Trevelyan.

'Chamberlain's interview with Mr. Gladstone that had misled the latter had taken place after the Cabinet of Saturday—I think on the morning of Monday, the 18th—and their meeting was on the subject of Childers's Budget proposals. Chamberlain, writing to me about it, said: "We are likely to want four millions less money. Therefore, says Childers, let us have a new Budget and clap an additional tax of £300,000 on wine." Chamberlain also wrote to me, after his interview with Mr. Gladstone, on the Monday afternoon, telling me that Randolph Churchill was going to give notice of a Committee to inquire into the state of Ireland, that Churchill thought that we should be out by that time and supporting him, and that he contemplated a separation from his own leaders, and a union, on a Radical Irish policy for "Local Government," and against coercion, of the two sides from below the gangway. Chamberlain added that, if the Russian matter "were out of the way, Mr. Gladstone would let us go, and I think *we must go*." This correspondence had left me unaware of any change in Chamberlain's view, if there was any, about the Land Purchase Bill. As soon as Chamberlain reached the House on the 20th, and heard from me what I had done, he also wrote a letter of resignation; but he was not pleased, and perhaps rightly, at my having taken so strong a step without consulting him on the precise point.

'In Chamberlain's letter, which was sent at 6 p.m. on the 20th, he said: "DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,—I have heard with great surprise that you have this afternoon given notice of the introduction of a Land Purchase Bill for Ireland, unaccompanied by any reference to the large scheme of Local Government, the promise of which for next year was the condition of the assent given by Sir Charles Dilke and myself to the proposal for dealing with Land Purchase during the present Session. I am convinced that a measure of the kind suggested by Lord Spencer will have a distinct tendency to increase the agitation for a separation between the two countries, and at the same time will seriously preju-

dice the success of any such scheme of Local Government as I have submitted to the Cabinet. . . . In the circumstances I feel that I have no alternative but to place my resignation in your hands."

'On the morning of May 21st Lefevre informed us that he should go with us, and also wrote a letter of resignation, in which he said that he did not agree with us as to Land Purchase, but that as we went he must go, too, on coercion.

'Mr. Gladstone sent for me on the 21st, and I suggested a way out, in our acceptance of the Land Purchase Bill, with a promise of "the Local Government Scheme" for 1886. Mr. Gladstone fell in with this view, and proposed that at Dublin, for which I was starting on Friday morning, May 22nd, I should try to get Spencer's consent to the limitation of the new Coercion Bill to a single year, and the promise of the "Local Government Bill" for 1886. On the 21st Mr. Gladstone wrote to me several times, as did also Chamberlain. Mr. Gladstone had written to Chamberlain on the night of the 20th: "I have never been in greater surprise than at the fresh trouble developed this afternoon. I believed myself to be acting entirely within the lines of your and Dilke's concurrence, and surely I am right in thinking that you could not have supposed that the notice of an intention to bring in a Bill offered the occasion on which to refer to the distinct though allied subject of Local Government. What I understood to be your and Dilke's procedure was to agree to a Land Purchase Bill with a provision of funds for one year, which would leave the whole measure . . . dependent on a fresh judgment which might be associated with Local Government as its condition. It seems to me to be a matter which we may perfectly well consider, and hope to arrange, in what terms reference shall be made to Local Government when the Bill is brought in. Will not that be the time to part, if part we must, which I do not believe? I send a copy of this to Dilke, and will only add, to the expression of my surprise, my deep concern."

'When I received a letter from Mr. Gladstone, enclosing a copy of his to Chamberlain, I replied (first showing my answer to Lefevre and sending it to Chamberlain) to the effect that the proposal to introduce a Land Purchase Bill had been discussed by and rejected by the Cabinet, that I could not concur in the reversal of its judgment, and that, thinking as I did that a deliberate opinion of the Cabinet

had been disregarded without warrant, and having, so thinking, resigned, I should be unable to attend any meeting of the Cabinet if one were summoned. I have a letter from Chamberlain to Mr. Gladstone dated 21st, and two later ones from Mr. Gladstone to myself. Chamberlain said:

'"MY DEAR MR. GLADSTONE,

'"I fear there has been a serious misapprehension on both sides with respect to a Land Purchase Bill, and I take blame to myself if I did not express myself with sufficient clearness. I certainly never imagined that the promise of introduction would be made without further reference to the Cabinet, or without some definite decision as to Local Government. I doubt very much if it is wise or even right to attempt to cover over the serious differences of principle that have lately disclosed themselves in the Cabinet. I think it is now certain that they will cause a split in the new Parliament, and it seems hardly fair to the constituencies that this should only be admitted after they have discharged their functions, and when they are unable to influence the result.

'"I am,

'"Yours sincerely,

'"J. CHAMBERLAIN."

'They *did* "cause" a split in the new Parliament, but Spencer the Coercionist and Chamberlain the Nationalist had changed places!'

'I do not know which of Mr. Gladstone's two letters dated the 21st is the earlier. In the one Mr. Gladstone wrote: "I hope that my note may have shown you that the time for considering your difficulty (if there be one) has not arrived. Please to tell me if this is so, as if it were not I should have to summon the Cabinet this afternoon to report what has happened. The messenger will wait for an answer.—Yours sincerely, W. E. GLADSTONE.—This is also for Chamberlain." I replied somewhat curtly that if there were a Cabinet I could not attend. The other letter referred to a conversation which had taken place between Hamilton and Chamberlain, and said that the latter was "willing that his letter should stand as *non avenu* until after the recess—*i.e.* (so I understand it), we should, before the Bill is introduced, consider in what terms the subject of Local Government should be referred to when the Bill is introduced. "I am not trying to bind you to this understand-

ing, but if you and he will come here at 3.0 we will try to get at the bottom of the matter." My reply was:

"21*st May.*

' "I certainly cannot withdraw my resignation unless the incident is explained to the whole of the members of the Cabinet. If you could see your way to circulate a box explaining that we were not consenting parties to the reversal of the opinion of the Cabinet, then I would try to help find some way out. I am, however, hopeless as to the wisdom of doing so. We differ so completely on the questions which will occupy the time of Parliament for the remainder of the Session that I feel that the Cabinet cannot hold together with advantage to the country. Lefevre strongly agrees with this view. Northbrook and Hartington, who, with Lefevre, were against Chamberlain and myself on the merits, evidently felt as amazed as we were at the reversal of the decision." '

'At this moment Chamberlain wrote to Mrs. Pattison' (in India) 'to say that the times were "most anxious. Mr. Gladstone is certainly going to retire soon, and the influence which has held together discordant elements will be removed with him. Fortunately, we know our own minds, and are not deficient in resolution, but it is not always easy to see clearly the right times and way of giving effect to our decisions. I do not myself believe that the struggle between us and the Whigs can be long postponed. It has nearly come over the question of Ireland, and even now we may be compelled to break off on this vital point. In any case we shall not join another Government nor meet another Parliament without a decision; and if it is against our views, the split will be final and complete, and we shall be out of office until we can lead a purely Radical Administration. We must win in the end, but the contest will be a bitter one, and may lead us farther than we contemplate at present. . . . I was dining last Saturday with Lord Ripon, who professed to be well pleased . . . and declared his full adhesion to the new gospel; but the majority of his class and school are getting thoroughly frightened, and will probably quicken and intensify the movement by setting themselves against it, instead of trying to guide and direct it. A good deal depends on Lord Hartington. He is constitutionally contemptuous of, and unsympathetic with, the democratic sentiment of the times."

'By our telegrams of May 21st, I saw that on the 20th Sir John Kirk, our man at Zanzibar, had been snubbed by Lord Granville, and I felt that if I went out upon the Irish Question I should be able at least to speak my mind as to the manner in which we had pandered to the Germans on the Zanzibar coast.

'On May 21st I wrote to Grant Duff: "Mr. G. will resign at the end of the session. I rather doubt Hartington being able to form a Government."

'On the morning of Friday, May 22nd, I left for Dublin, and by teatime was at the Viceregal Lodge.'

On the previous day Sir Charles had written:

"LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD,
"*May* 21*st*, 1885.

"MY DEAR GRANT DUFF,

"Off to Ireland, where I expect to be Boycotted by both sides *—by the Nationalists because I stay with Spencer, and by the Orangemen because we sit at the Mansion House.

"Yours,
"CHS. W. D."

'As Mr. Gladstone at our last interview had bid me convert Spencer if I could, and virtually promised that he would support our views if Spencer would, I had asked Trevelyan and Harcourt to back me up in letters. Harcourt made delay. Trevelyan wrote on the 23rd: "I am sorry the whole thing is in the newspapers, and see in it another reason for getting it settled. If you and Chamberlain make it a point to have the Bill for a year, I should be glad to see the concession made. The concession on the part of those who take another view would not be greater than was made by those of us who objected to have a Land Bill that was not based upon a new system of Local Government."

'Early in the morning of Saturday, the 23rd, before the meeting of my Commission at the City Hall, I had had a long talk with Spencer, and I felt, more strongly than I ever had before, that his position in Dublin was untenable, and that he ought to be allowed to go. On Whit Sunday I attended church with Spencer, and in the afternoon took him for the only walk which he had enjoyed for a long time. We passed the spot where Lord Frederick Cavendish was killed, and accompanied by a single aide-de-camp, but

* It turned out the other way.

watched at a distance by two policemen in plain clothes, and met at every street corner by two others, walked to the strawberry gardens, and on our return, it being a lovely Sunday when the Wicklow Mountains were at their best and the hawthorn in bloom, met thousands of Dublin people driving out to the strawberry gardens on cars. In the course of the whole long walk but one man lifted his hat to Spencer, who was universally recognized, but assailed by the majority of those we met with shouts of. "Who killed Myles Joyce ?"* while some varied the proceedings by calling "Murderer !" after him. A few days later, when I was driving with Lady Spencer in an open carriage, a well-dressed bicyclist came riding through the cavalry escort, and in a quiet, conversational tone observed to us, "Who killed Myles Joyce ?" At his dinner-party on the Sunday evening Spencer told us that a Roman Catholic priest† who was present (the Vicar of Bray, I think, but not *the* Bray) was the only priest in Ireland who would enter his walls, while the Castle was boycotted by every Archbishop and Bishop. On Monday morning, the 25th, Whit Monday, I paid a visit to the Mansion House at the request of the Lord Mayor of Dublin, taking by Spencer's leave the Viceregal carriages there, where they had in his second viceroyalty not been before, and was received by the Lord Mayor in state, which consisted in much exhibition of the most gorgeous porter (in green and gold) that my eyes had ever beheld. I afterwards went on to see Hamilton,‡ the Under-Secretary. He offered us as a maximum County Boards plus a Central Education Board for Ireland, to administer all the grants with rating powers, and to be called a great experiment to be extended if it answered. In the evening I discussed this with Spencer, who went a little farther, and offered, in addition to County Boards, four elective Central Boards for Ireland, to discharge much the same duties which Chamberlain's scheme gave to the Central Board; but Spencer obstinately refused to take the plunge of making the four Boards into one Board. It was on this point that we broke off; and he never got farther forward until after the Government had gone out.

* One of several men hanged for the Maamtrasna murders. All the other men sentenced protested that Myles Joyce was innocent, and died protesting it. Strong efforts were made to gain a reprieve for this lad.

† Father Healy, parish priest of Bray, and most famous of modern Irish talkers.

‡ Sir Robert Hamilton, who had succeeded Mr. Bourke as the permanent head of Dublin Castle.

He has since declared that his conversion to a more advanced Home Rule scheme than that of Chamberlain, which he had refused, was caused by the return of a certain majority of Nationalist members; but he was perfectly aware at this time what that majority would be, and I confess that I have never been able to understand why Hamilton and Spencer should have held out as they did in May against the moderate scheme, and have supported the extreme one as early as July, which I believe to have been the case. Had Spencer yielded at this moment, it is at least possible that the Irish question would have been settled. At all events, there has never been in our time so fair a chance of settlement.

'On Tuesday, the 26th, I heard from Lefevre, who wrote strongly against the Coercion Bill for Spencer's benefit, but added in a separate letter that he regarded the notice in the *Birmingham Post* as indicating that Chamberlain had been talking freely about the dissensions in the Cabinet, and that if this was so he considered it unfortunate, as tending to increase the difficulty of getting any further concessions from Spencer or other members of the Cabinet who favoured coercion.

'On Tuesday evening the Commission dined with Gray, and met Dr. Walsh, the new Archbishop; but at Dr. Walsh's wish I had gone to Gray's house half an hour before dinner to see the Archbishop privately, and to be thanked by him for the part that I had taken in trying to prevent opposition to the choice. In the evening Gray had a party at which both sides were represented, Chief Justice Morris being among those present. Gray's house, although the Spencers disliked him, was one at which the parties always met as much as is possible at all in Ireland. When Gray came out of gaol after his imprisonment he gave a small dinner, at which were present the Judge who had sentenced him, the gaoler who had had him in custody, and the prosecuting counsel. The most interesting man at Gray's was Fottrell, the man whose memoirs ought to be interesting, for he had acted as intermediary between the Castle (that is, Hamilton) and Parnell at the time when secret communications were passing between them, although openly they were at war.

'Dickson, the Ulster Liberal member,* was at Gray's, and he announced that he had at last come over to Chamberlain's

* M.P. for Dungannon, Tyrone, 1880-1885. He afterwards became a leading Unionist.

scheme. Now, Hartington was crossing the next day to stay at the Viceregal Lodge, and was to speak at Belfast under Dickson's auspices, and the announcement of Dickson's change of front was a startling blow to him and Spencer.

'On the morning of Wednesday, the 27th, I wrote to Grant Duff: "A pretty pass you Whigs have brought this country to! I really think we Radicals ought to be allowed to try. We certainly could not do it *worse*. 'Poland' has been a byword, yet Poland is far less of a weakness to Russia than Ireland to us, and the Russians have now the Polish peasantry with them, if they have the towns and nobles against them. *We* have *no* friends in Ireland. All our policy has aimed at conciliating at least Ulster, and now Ulster is fast becoming as Nationalist as Cork. The Liberals carried Belfast freeholders in the late Antrim election to the cry of 'Down with coercion!' and 'No special legislation!' Hartington comes to-night, and I shall try to arrange some compromise with him and Spencer as to the future—probably an Irish elective education Council."

'On the evening of the 27th I had a long conference with Hartington and Spencer, in which I "worked" Dickson much. Before this I had had the third meeting of my Commission, and then a public meeting in connection with the Dublin Ladies' Central Association, a body dealing with the Housing of the Working Classes. On the morning of May 28th Spencer came into my bedroom before eight o'clock, and told me that Hartington was very ill, suffering from sleeplessness and fever, and that it would be quite impossible for him to make his Belfast speech. . . . Dickson soon came to the Viceregal Lodge, and earnestly begged me to go to Belfast in Hartington's place, but under the circumstances I felt that it was impossible that I should do so, although he promised me that a special train should be waiting at the last moment if I would change my mind.

'I received this day a letter from Cardinal Manning strongly urging that Chamberlain, Lefevre, and I, should stay in. "If you and the like of you leave the Whigs, they will fall back and unite in resisting you. So long as you are in contact with them, they will yield to reason. These are the thoughts of an Old Testament Radical." But the Old Testament Radical went on to make proposals to me with regard to the Roman Catholic vote in Chelsea which would have astonished the Old Testament prophets.

'Another letter which I received this day was from O'Shea about Parnell's opinions on the Coercion Bill, but it is so obscure that I can make nothing of it. It was on a suggestion of Lefevre's with regard to bringing the Coercion Bill into force only by "proclamation." It shows, however, if O'Shea is to be believed, that Parnell was willing to accept a coercion measure of some kind, or, at all events, to haggle about its terms, if publicly resisting it as a whole.

'By the same post I received a letter from Heneage* professing to state the general view of the House of Commons, and pronouncing in favour of a liberal policy towards Ireland. "(1) Non-renewal of the Crimes Act. (2) Amendment of the jury laws. (3) Amendment of the purchase clauses. (4) Abolition of the Lord Lieutenancy. (5) Improvement of Local Government." This I showed to Spencer, with a memorandum of my own in which I said that it was "a curious letter from a Whig." Spencer wrote on my memorandum in returning the letter: "It is an odd letter. . . . He wrote to me the other day about the abolition of the Lord Lieutenancy, rather apologizing for bringing it on. I replied deprecating any movement which might not go with action. To denounce an office without at once abolishing it would weaken the hands of him who filled it."

'I wrote to Lefevre and Chamberlain that Hartington had come very well, and was very well at dinner, but bored at having to speak. "Walker told him what I told him as to the unwisdom of speaking in favour of coercion in Belfast immediately after the anti-coercion speeches of the Liberals at the Antrim election; and to-day he is ill. I do not know how far the two things are connected; but the papers will *say* they are."

'I lunched with Sir Edward Guinness and sat in the Speaker's chair of the Irish Parliament; dined with Sir Robert Hamilton at the Yacht Club at Kingstown; slept on board the boat and crossed next day; spent Saturday to Tuesday at Dockett Eddy; and on Tuesday was at the State Concert, where several of us tried to patch up some means of being able to meet in Cabinet on June 5th. On Thursday, June 4th, I had a long talk with Mr. Gladstone, and, on his agreeing to support the Heneage-Lefevre-O'Shea proposal, now supported by Chamberlain, for only bringing the Coercion Bill into force by a proclamation, agreed to attend

* Mr. Edward Heneage, for many years M.P. for Grimsby, and for a short time Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in 1886. He was afterwards a leading Unionist.

the Cabinet the next day, but without withdrawing my resignation, which remained "suspended."

'I began on the 3rd and ended on the 5th June a letter to Grant Duff in reply to one from him bidding me not break off from the Government on any but a clear and obvious issue. I told him that (1) Radicals in a minority would only ever get their way by often threatening to go, even on secondary points, and that they must not threaten unless they "meant it." (2) Mr. G. insisted he was "going." "Therefore we have to count with Hartington. We doubt if we can form part of a Hartington Government, and we can't do so if we do not . . . impose our terms by threats. . . . This is why I have been forcing the pace of late. . . . Chamberlain is a little timid just now, in view of the elections and the fury of the *Pall Mall*. I could not drive Chamberlain out without his free consent, so I am rather tied. Still, we shall (June 5th) get our own way, I fancy, at to-day's Cabinet."

'On the morning of June 5th my position in attending the Cabinet was weakened, if not made ridiculous, by a letter from Spencer in which he refused the Heneage-Lefevre-O'Shea compromise. But I went all the same, for I was not supposed to know what he had written to Mr. Gladstone. The first matter discussed was the Budget. I opposed the proposed increase of the wine duties from 1s. to 1s. 3d., and from 2s. 6d. to 3s. (all bottled wine to be at the 3s. rate). I carried with me at first all except Mr. Gladstone against Childers, and at last Mr. Gladstone also. Childers then left the room; Mr. Gladstone, Lord Granville, Harcourt, and the Chancellor, one by one, went after him, but he would not come back. The Guards at Alexandria were mentioned, and then Spencer's letter to Mr. Gladstone against the proclamation clause read, whereon Chamberlain and I protested against coercion as a whole, and no decision upon any point was come to.

'On June 6th I dined at Harcourt's Queen's Birthday dinner, and afterwards attended Lady Granville's Foreign Office party, but these were expiring festivities.

'On Monday, June 8th, there was a Cabinet, at which the first matter was Irish Coercion and the proclamation clause. Spencer now offered proclamation by the Viceroy (*i.e.*, not by the Government in London, which was our proposal) for all the Bill except the intimidation part, but refused to have it for the boycotting clause. Trevelyan now joined Chamberlain, Lefevre, and myself, in opposing

Spencer; the others supported him, but tried to make him yield. We decided that if he yielded we should ask that a statement to the Cabinet should be promised to precede proclamation.'

On June 8th Mr. Childers moved the second reading of his Budget Bill, which was met by an amendment moved by Sir Michael Hicks Beach, condemning the proposed increase upon beer and spirits without any corresponding increase on wine, and declining to increase the duty on real property until promised changes were made in regard to local taxation.

'I made a good debating Budget speech, of which Sir John Lambert wrote "In Tea, Domine, spero," and I replied: "Since the time of Sir Thomas More all these profane 'good things' have come from devout Catholics."'

Other leading men followed, and Mr. Gladstone summed up by saying that you must tax either alcohol or tea and sugar. But the division went against him: 6 Liberals voted with the Tories, and 76 were absent. The majority against the Government was 12. The end had at length come.

CHAPTER XLI

FALL OF ADMINISTRATION

JUNE TO JULY, 1885

ON June 8th, as has been seen, the Government were defeated by a majority of 12.

'On June 9th there was a further Cabinet. We had been beaten on the Budget, but in the meantime Spencer had yielded, and Mr. Gladstone was very anxious to be able to say that we were all agreed. Therefore we discussed a Coercion Bill in the first place, but the four of us at once refused to agree to Spencer's concession as sufficient.'* 'It passes my understanding, therefore, how Mr. Gladstone is able to pronounce, as he has done, "unfounded" the statement that the Cabinet was at odds upon the Irish question at the moment of its defeat. Three of us had resigned on it, and our letters were in his pocket. The next matter discussed was resignation, which did not take a minute; and then the question of what Customs dues should be levied. . . .

'After the Cabinet there was a levee, at which I had some conversation with Lord Salisbury as to the Redistribution Bill in the Lords, and his reply showed that he meant to form a Government.'

'On June 10th my discussions with Lord Salisbury as to the Redistribution Bill were continued, and it was decided that the Bill was to go forward in spite of the Ministerial crisis, although this was resisted by the Fourth Party in the House of Commons.'

On the previous evening Sir Charles Dilke addressed an audience at the City Liberal Club in a speech of unwonted passion. Confidently anticipating that the Redistribution

* Namely, that the Coercion Bill should only have effect after a special proclamation had been issued. Sir Charles Dilke notes, September 20th, 1891, the receipt of a letter from Mr. Chamberlain, thanking him for extracts from his Memoir of 1884-85 on Irish affairs, and saying that where it dealt with the same points it tallied exactly with his recollections.

Bill would go through in spite of any change of Ministry and the resistance of the Fourth Party, he dwelt on the magnitude of the change for which he had so long wrought. But the central point of the speech was a eulogy of Mr. Gladstone, which reflected the temper of a scene that had passed in the House of Commons the same day, and he demanded in the name of Liberalism that the battle should be won, "not only with his great name, but under his actual leadership."

This was the declaration of the Radicals against all thought of a Hartington Administration. Referring to the speech, he writes:

'I was greatly congratulated on this day on a speech which I had made at a house dinner of the City Liberal Club on the 9th. Chamberlain wrote: "Your speech was admirable, and I have heard from one who was present that the effect was electrical. You never did better in your life." He went on to agree with me in my wish that Herbert Gladstone should be appointed Chief Whip for the Opposition, and then to say that we must be very careful what we did, or "we shall destroy the Tory Government before it has done our work." I had asked him to sit to Holl for a portrait for me, and he said that he would do so, but that he was going to speak all over the country in support of the unauthorized programme. He did sit, and a very fine picture was the result.'*

'On Saturday, June 13th, I presided at the Cobden Club dinner, at which Chamberlain was also present, and our speeches attracted some attention.'†

'On Tuesday, the 16th, we had a meeting of the leaders, at which were present Lords Selborne, Northbrook, Carlingford, Derby, Kimberley, Mr. Gladstone, Harcourt, Childers, Chamberlain, Lefevre, and myself. Salisbury, through Arthur Balfour, had verbally asked for (1) priority for

* Now at the National Portrait Gallery, to which Sir Charles bequeathed it.

† Sir Charles from the chair advocated "destroying the monopoly in land," and "establishing an Irish control of Irish affairs." Chamberlain advocated "some great measure of devolution by which the Imperial Parliament shall retain its supremacy, but shall nevertheless relegate to subordinate authorities the control and administration of their local business," and added: "I think it is a consolation to my right hon. friend as well as to myself that our hands are free, and that our voices may now be lifted up in the cause of freedom and justice."

Supply; (2) if we would, supposing that we opposed their Budget, support them in borrowing by Exchequer Bills. We decided to make as little reply as possible. In Winston Churchill's Life of his father he says we promised "facilities," but we refused.'

'Randolph Churchill sounded me to know if in the event of his taking office he could sit for Birmingham, and Chamberlain answered: "If R. C. takes office *without* coercion, we should not oppose him. If *with*, I should certainly fight to accentuate the betrayal."

'On the afternoon of June 16th I had a serious talk with Chamberlain about manhood suffrage, which he had advocated in a speech, pointing out to him that this question of manhood as against adult suffrage (*i.e.*, including women) was the only one on which we differed, and the only question which seemed likely to divide us. The outcome of our talk was that we should postpone as long as possible the inevitable difference, and make it last as short a time as possible by postponing it till the very moment when the thing was likely to be carried. When the time came that our people should be raving for manhood suffrage, and that I should have to join the Tories in carrying adult suffrage as against it, I might, if in office, have to go out by myself, but this could not be avoided.'*

'On the 16th, also, I wrote to Grant Duff that there was "no liking for Ireland or the Irish," but "an almost universal feeling now in both parties that some form of Home Rule must be tried. My own belief is that it will be tried too late, as all our remedies have been."

'I told him how I had written to solicit a peerage for him, and that the Liberals would be in office again in "January," and when his term of office was to expire—a true prophecy.'

'On June 18th there was another Cabinet of the outgoing Ministers, although Hartington and Lord Granville were not present. There were present Mr. Gladstone, Lord Selborne, Carlingford, Northbrook, Kimberley, Derby, Rosebery, Harcourt, Childers, Trevelyan, Lefevre, Chamberlain, and myself. Mr. Gladstone had heard on the previous night from the Queen, enclosing a letter from Lord Salisbury to her, asking for an undertaking that we would support him on his Budget and in Supply, as he could not now

* A memorandum on this subject by Sir Charles, published by the Society for Promoting Adult Suffrage, in the last years of his life, is quoted on p. 469 of this volume.

dissolve. We again refused to give any but very general assurances.

'On June 19th, Randolph Churchill having blown up Northcote' (who had been removed to the Upper House), 'and shown his power by making himself Dictator, now wished for freedom and some excuse for preventing the formation of a Government, and a curious letter from him was forwarded to me by Chamberlain. In Chamberlain's covering letter there is the first allusion to our proposed tour in Ireland.

'On Saturday, June 20th, there was a last Cabinet or "full meeting" of outgoing Ministers, all being present except Spencer and our two racing men—Hartington and Rosebery. We further considered the question of "assurances," at the renewed suggestion of the Queen, and finally declined to give them. Though this was called as a Cabinet, Mrs. Gladstone was in the room. Saturday to Monday I spent in a last visit to the smallpox camp at Darenth. On Monday, the 22nd, I made a fighting speech at a meeting at the Welsh chapel in Radnor Street at Chelsea;* and on Wednesday, June 24th, I left my office.

'My successor was Arthur Balfour, and I initiated him into the business of the Local Government Board at his request, after a first interview at Sloane Street. As late as June 21st Harcourt had made up his mind that the Tories would be unable to form a Government, and that it was his painful duty to come back; and he wrote to me that he

* The speech advocated not merely Home Rule, but Home Rule all round. Sir Charles expressed a wish to "study in Ireland a plan for the devolution to Welsh, Scottish, and Irish bodies of much business which Parliament is incompetent to discharge, and which at the present time is badly done or not done at all."

"The principles of decentralization which ought to be applied are clear to those who know the two kingdoms and the Principality, but the details must be studied on the spot. As regards Wales and Scotland, no great controversial questions are likely to arise. But as regards the Irish details, it is the intention of Mr. Chamberlain and myself to inquire in Ireland of those who know Ireland best. Officials in Ireland, contrary to public belief, are many of them in favour of decentralization, but still more are the Bishops and clergy of various denominations, legal authorities, and the like. Some writers who have recently attacked a proposal which has been made to abolish in Ireland what is known as 'Dublin Castle' are unaware, apparently, of the fact that not only officials of the highest experience, and many statesmen on both sides who know Ireland well, are agreed on the necessity for the abolition, but that those who have had the most recent experience in the office of Viceroy are themselves sharers in the decentralization view which now prevails."

had informed Mr. Gladstone that "I would stand by him if he agreed to come back *whatever might happen.*" Chamberlain wrote on this that it was impossible if Spencer remained. "It will be bad for us and for the settlement of the Irish question."

'Chamberlain and I were now intending to visit Ireland, but Manning declined to give us letters, and wrote on June 25th: "What am I to do? I am afraid of your Midlothian in Ireland. How can I be godfather to Hengist and Horsa?" I replied:

'"DEAR CARDINAL MANNING,

'"I fear I have made myself far from clear. You speak of a Midlothian. I should not for a moment have dreamt of asking you for letters had not that been most carefully guarded against. We are not going to make a single speech or to attend any dinner, meeting, or reception, in any part of Ireland. Our journey is private, and our wish is to visit the Catholic Archbishops and Bishops and to find out what they want. It has sprung from your own suggestion, and from my conversation, held also at your suggestion, with Dr. Walsh. It would not conduce to any possibility of settlement and of future peace if, after proposing, at your suggestion, to go to men like the Archbishops Croke and Walsh, we should have to state that we renounce our visit because they refuse to receive us. You know what passed as to Dr. Walsh, and you know that if Mr. Gladstone had reformed his Government we had made that matter one of our conditions. Surely that was pretty clear evidence of our desire to act with you in a matter which is certainly above all party. But it is 'now or never.'"

'On the same day Chamberlain wrote proposing that we should meet Trevelyan and Lefevre at fixed and short intervals to produce concerted action, and consulting me as to whether we should include Morley. The first consultation took place at my Royal Commission office at noon on July 4th, and Morley was present as well as Trevelyan, and I think Lefevre.'

'On June 27th I had a last fight with Mr. Gladstone. The outgoing Government had given a baronetcy to Errington, personally my friend, but a baronetcy given under circumstances which I thought politically discreditable, and I protested strongly. I told Mr. Gladstone that it had long been my opinion that there is insufficient consultation of the opinion of the party, as well as of Cabinets and

ex-Cabinets, on questions of the deepest moment. "For example, since I have been a member of the 'Inner Circle,' many decisions of the gravest moment as to Irish affairs have been taken without reference to the general opinion of the leaders or of the party. When Mr. Forster first induced Lord Granville to give letters to Mr. Errington, I stated my own view in favour of the appointment of an official representative of this country to the Roman Church, if there was work which must be done between the Government and that Church. I always protested against the secret arrangement, and the last straw has been the resistance to Walsh." Such was my private note.'

'Chamberlain wrote: "Mr. G. has yielded to Lord G., and has done an act unfair to us and without notice. I have seen O'Shea. I think the 'visit' may yet be all right." I wrote to Mr. Gladstone:

'"I feel bound to express my dismay at seeing this day that honours have been conferred on that excellent fellow Errington at a moment when it will be felt by the great majority of people who do not see round corners that he is rewarded for the fight made by him on behalf of the defeated policy of resistance to the selection as Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin of the accomplished gentleman on whom the whole Irish Roman Catholic clergy and people had set their hearts. I have already described to Lord Granville in your presence what I thought the fatal results of this policy of interference against a unanimous Irish sentiment in the choice of the great Roman Catholic dignitaries in Ireland—a policy which has, in the belief of the thoughtful men of all parties, among whom I may name privately the new Lord Chancellor of Ireland,* undone the effects of your Land Acts of 1871 and 1881, and made the resistance to the Union stronger and more unanimous than it ever was before. Surely such an intention as that to specially honour Mr. Errington at such a moment might have been named to me when I so strongly expressed before you and Lord Granville my opinion of the policy. Mr. Forster, the initiator of the Errington policy, has returned to the Liberal front bench, and sat next to me there. I fear I must take the opportunity of leaving it, as I do not see how I can fail to express the opinion I hold of the conferring of special honour at such a moment on Mr. Errington."†

* Mr. Gibson, afterwards created Lord Ashbourne.

† A letter from Mr. Gladstone to Mr. Errington, dated June 30th, 1885, is given in the *Life of Granville*, vol. ii., p. 292.

'Mr. Gladstone replied:

'"1, Richmond Terrace,
'"*June 27th*, 1885.

'"My dear Dilke,

'"I feel that the coincidence of the Walsh appointment with the Errington baronetcy is unfortunate, but I think that the grant of the baronetcy or of something in that sense is unavoidable. I regard Gibson's confidential disclosure to you as an absurd exaggeration indulged in for party purposes. The policy, and any ingratitude to an agent of it, are wholly different matters; and your disapproval of the first never conveyed to my mind the idea of speaking to you about the second. You are aware of the immense stress laid by Spencer on the Errington mission, which Granville more traditionally (as I think) supported. For my part, I never did more than acquiesce in it, and I think it highly probable that no such thing will be renewed. As to 'diplomatic relations' with the Pope, I am entirely opposed to them.

'"Sincerely yours,
'"W. E. Gladstone."

'I was not opposed to diplomatic relations with the Pope, but to the extraordinary anomalies involved in the Mission that was no Mission. My conversation with Gibson had been at a party at Lady Ridley's, where I congratulated him upon his high office. He began with a laugh: "I am popular with all parties. Whose congratulations do you think were the first that I received?" A happy inspiration struck me, and I at once answered "Walsh"—a lucky guess which completely puzzled him, for he said, "Who told you?"

'Chamberlain wrote the next day: "Reflection confirms me in the opinion that Mr. Gladstone has not treated us well. I cannot resist the conclusion that on both occasions he concealed his intentions, knowing that we disapproved of them, and in order to force our hands. I would cordially join in a protest against this, although, as I have already told you, I do not think the last proceeding—in the matter of Errington—will justify a formal secession. People generally, especially in the country, cannot understand the importance of the matter, and would not back up our quarrel."

'Chamberlain, writing on June 27th or 28th,* said: "On

* It was on June 17th that Mr. Chamberlain had delivered his famous denunciation of Dublin Castle, and had declared that "the pacification of Ireland depends, I believe, on the concession to Ireland of the right to govern itself in the matter of its purely domestic government." He went on to speak of an Irishman being at every

the greatest issue between us and the Whigs Mr. G. is on our side, and has told Harcourt that if he stands at the General Election he will make this a prominent feature in his platform, and will adopt in principle our scheme—Local Government and devolution. This will immensely strengthen our position if we finally decide to press the matter. I say 'if' because I wait to have more positive assurances as to Parnell's present attitude. If he throws us over, I do not believe that we can go farther at present, but O'Shea remains confident that matters will come right."'

On June 29th, Sir Charles replied to Mr. Gladstone:

'MY DEAR SIR,

'Harcourt, Chamberlain, and Lefevre, have all lectured me, and the former tells me that you have accepted a proposal to stand again for Midlothian. This is so great a thing that smaller ones must not be allowed to make even small discords, so please put my letter of Saturday in the fire, and forgive me for having put you to the trouble of reading and replying to it. I fancy that overwork and long-continued loss of all holidays except Sundays have told upon me, and that I must be inclined to take too serious a view of things.

'Sincerely yours,

'CHARLES W. DILKE.'

'On June 30th Chamberlain wrote: "Ireland. I heard some days ago from the Duchess of St. Albans, and replied that we would certainly call if anywhere in her neighbourhood" (near Clonmel). "Next time I see you we may make some progress with our plans. I have a most satisfactory letter from Davitt—voluntary on his part, and assuring us that *United Ireland** does not represent the views of the Nationalist party. See also an article in the *Nation*, and Davitt's own speech at Hyde Park.† I shall reply rather effusively. I cannot altogether acquit Parnell of duplicity.

step controlled by "an English official, appointed by a foreign Government."

* *United Ireland*, then edited by Mr. William O'Brien and Mr. T. M. Healy, discouraged the visit.

† Davitt's leanings were always much stronger towards English Radicalism than those of most among his colleagues. But the decisive attitude was that of Mr. Parnell, whose power was then paramount, not only in Cork, but throughout all Ireland. He discussed the project with one of his colleagues, Mr. John O'Connor, to whom he expressed the view that Mr. Chamberlain was aspiring to replace Mr. Gladstone in the leadership, and that he would do nothing

I think he fears our visit, and that we may cut him out. I am sure that neither he nor anyone else will succeed in boycotting us. Parnell does not admit this feeling, but I am losing confidence in his honesty. We can go to Ashley's and decline Cork." '*

'I hear very encouraging accounts of the feeling in the country. I am assured that we (the Radicals) never held so strong a position—that the counties will be swept for the Liberals, and that the whole atmosphere of the House of Commons will be changed after November. I firmly believe that this is true. A little patience, and we shall secure all we have fought for.'

'On June 30th I wrote fully to Mrs. Pattison, who was ill of typhoid in the Madras hills, but without my yet knowing it. "I've been thinking over grave words I would say to you about politics." I went on to say that politics were not to me amusement. "I could not have heart to live such a life at all if the religion of life did not surround my politics. I chat the chatter about persons and ambitions that others chat, and, in my perpetual brain fatigue, shirk the trouble of trying to put into words thoughts which I fancy you must exactly share. How can you share them if you are never shown they're there? Dear Lady, please to try and feel, however unable I am to express it, that my life is now one, and that there are not things to pick among, and things to be cast aside, but duties only, which are pleasures in the doing of them well, and which you must help me do. It is in old age that power comes. An old man in English politics may exert enormous power without effort, and with no drain at all upon his health and vital force. The work of thirty or forty years of political life goes in England to the building-up of political reputation and position. During that long period no power is exercised except by irregular means, such as the use of threats of resignation. It is in old age only that power comes that can be used legitimately and peacefully by the once-strong man. I'm still young enough, and have of illusions yearly crops sufficient to believe that it can be used for good, and that it is a plain duty so to use it, and I would not remain in political life did I not think so." '

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which could assist him in this purpose, because he thought that he "could squeeze more out of Gladstone than he could out of Chamberlain."

* Mr. Evelyn Ashley, who had been Under-Secretary of the Colonies in the Gladstone Government, had a house and property at Classiebawn in Sligo, which had once belonged to Lord Palmerston.

CHAPTER XLII

OUT OF OFFICE

JULY, 1885

AFTER Lord Salisbury had formed, in June, 1885, what was called the "stop-gap Government," charged with carrying on business till the General Election fixed for the following winter, the heads of the Liberal party began to mature their plans. It soon became evident that the cardinal fact to be decided was whether Mr. Gladstone should continue to lead. This, again, was found to depend upon the policy adopted in relation to Ireland.

The Irish Question was at the moment in an extraordinary position. Lord Salisbury had appointed Lord Carnarvon, a known sympathizer with Home Rule, as Viceroy. Further, the Tory leaders in the House of Commons were refusing to take any responsibility for the actions of Lord Spencer, which were challenged especially in regard to the verdict upon one of the men sentenced for the Maamtrasna murders. This put Sir Charles and Mr. Chamberlain, who had always disapproved the policy of coercion, in a very difficult position, the more difficult because Mr. Trevelyan, a member of their inner Radical group, was jointly concerned with Lord Spencer to defend these actions.

'On July 4th I received from Maynooth a letter of thanks from Dr. Walsh for my congratulations on his appointment to the Archbishopric of Dublin, and he expressed the hope that we should meet in Dublin when I came over with Chamberlain. On the same day, Saturday, July 4th, there took place at noon at my office a meeting of Chamberlain, Trevelyan, Lefevre, John Morley, and myself, in which we

discussed the proposed mission of Wolff to Egypt, resolving that we would oppose it unless the Conservative Government should drop it. We were wrong, for it afterwards turned out that they meant evacuation. Next the proposed movement on Dongola, which we did not believe to be seriously intended; then the proposal to increase the wine duty, which I was able to announce (on Foreign Office information) that I knew that Lord Salisbury would drop; then the succession duties, with regard to which we decided to support a motion to be brought forward by Dillwyn; then police enfranchisement, we deciding that I was to move an instruction on going into Committee to extend the Bill, so as to shorten the period of residence for all electors.'

'Before we separated we discussed the inquiry proposed by the Irish members into the Maamtrasna business. Trevelyan thought that he was obliged in honour to speak against inquiry, but we decided that he must not press for a division in resistance to the Irish demand.'

'On Monday, July 6th, I presided over my Royal Commission in the morning, and in the evening dined at Grillion's Club. In the afternoon Mr. Gladstone sent for me, and told me that whether he would lead the party or would not, at the dissolution, or in the new Parliament, would depend on whether the main plank in the programme was what I called Home Rule or what Chamberlain called the National Council scheme, or only the ordinary scheme of Local Government for all parts of the United Kingdom. If the latter alone was to be contemplated, he said that others would suffice for the task. Parnell's acquiescence in the Home Rule scheme he thought essential. If Parnell, having got more from the Tories, was going to oppose, he, Mr. Gladstone, could not go on; and he evidently thought that I should have the means of discovering what would be Parnell's attitude. Parnell had, of course, been for what I believe was really his own scheme, suggested to Chamberlain by O'Shea. But he was now in league with R. Churchill and Lord Carnarvon. I advised Mr. Gladstone to deal directly with Parnell. but he said that he would not, and I noted in my diary that he and Parnell were equally tortuous in their methods. Mr. Gladstone, failing me, as he said, would deal with Grosvenor and Mrs. O'Shea. But it was clear to me that he had already tried this channel.'

'On the next day I received interesting letters from

Dr. Walsh and Sir Frederick Roberts. The latter completely destroyed the foolish War Office plan of preparing for a campaign in the Black Sea, and once more laid down the principle that England must go to war with Russia rather than permit her to occupy any portion of Afghanistan in face of our interest and of our pledge to the contrary.

'Dr. Walsh wrote that in going to Rome he was by no means determined to accept the archbishopric. "I am not Archbishop; acceptance is an essential point, and I have a view of certain matters to set before His Holiness before that stage is reached. I have sent on to Rome a written statement of my views, that the matter may be considered before I arrive there. I am thoroughly convinced that there is another position in which I could be far more useful both for Church and country. The Archbishopric of Dublin, now that it can be dealt with as a purely ecclesiastical matter, can be very easily provided for."

'I suppose that Dr. Walsh wished to be Papal Legate. He went on to say:

'"As to the Bishops you should see, I would say, in the South, as you begin there, Cashel and Limerick (Cloyne, unfortunately, is very deaf; otherwise I should like you to meet him). In the West, *Galway*, Elphin, Achonry. In the North, Raphoe (of whom Mr. Childers can tell you something), Clogher, Ardagh, Meath, and Down and Connor. In this province of Dublin our Bishops are either very old or very young in the episcopacy; they could not give you much information. All I have mentioned are generally on the popular side. Of those on the less popular or non-popular side, we have Cork, Kerry, and *Coadjutor of Clonfert*. Clonfert himself is on the most advanced National lines. But his views are rather general. It might be well to see him. He is a great admirer of Davitt's.

'"I remain, my dear Sir Charles,

'"Sincerely yours,

'"WILLIAM J. WALSH."

'I sent this letter to Chamberlain, who replied that it was very satisfactory.

'On Saturday, July 11th, we had another meeting of our "party," I again being in the chair, Chamberlain, Lefevre, and John Morley, being present, and Trevelyan absent. We decided that Chamberlain, Lefevre, and Dilke should see Mr. Gladstone as to the Maamtrasna inquiry, in which

we were strongly opposed to Spencer. With regard to the organization of the Liberal party, which meant the adoption of Schnadhorst by the party, Chamberlain, Lefevre, and Dilke, were also to see Mr. Gladstone.

'On Saturday evening I went down to Dockett, where I stayed till Monday, Cyril Flower spending with me the day of Sunday, July 12th. On Monday, July 13th, I again presided at my Royal Commission, and again dined at Grillion's.

'On the same day Chamberlain, Lefevre, and I, saw Mr. Gladstone. After talking over Maamtrasna, I repeated a statement which O'Shea had made to me, namely, that Fottrell* had had a two-hours interview with Randolph Churchill on Home Rule. I also informed Mr. Gladstone that O'Shea had shown me a letter from Alfred Austin' (afterwards Poet Laureate), 'a hot Tory leader-writer on the *Standard*, asking to be introduced to Parnell for the benefit of the country. Lefevre having gone away, Chamberlain and I talked with Mr. Gladstone as to organization. It was decided that we should have an interview with him on the subject (Grosvenor to be present) the next day.

'I was going out a good deal this week, and on the Wednesday was at parties at Lady Salisbury's, at the Austrian Embassy, and at the Duchess of Westminster's, and at one of them met Harcourt and arranged for a meeting on Thursday, July 16th, at my Commission office in Parliament Street, with Chamberlain and Harcourt, to discuss Schnadhorst; Harcourt favouring our view that he should be adopted by the party, which was done, and the National Liberal Federation installed at Parliament Street. But the Whips "captured" it! On Friday, July 17th, Chamberlain and his son dined with me to meet Harcourt and Gray of the Irish party and *Freeman's Journal*.

'On Saturday, July 18th, we had our usual cabal, Trevelyan being again absent, and the same four present as on the previous Saturday. We discussed the proposed Royal Commission on the depression of trade; land purchase, Ireland; party organization; and the land question.

'On July 22nd I heard from Mr. Gladstone:

* Sir Charles, during his visit to Dublin, had been much impressed by Mr. Fottrell, who had acted as intermediary between the Castle and the Nationalists (see p. 140). He wrote to Mrs. Pattison that Mr. Fottrell and Sir Robert Hamilton were the only two men who counted in that city.

'"1, RICHMOND TERRACE,
"'*July* 21*st*, 1885.

'"MY DEAR DILKE,

'"I cannot forbear writing to express the hope that you and Chamberlain may be able to say or do something to remove the appearance now presented to the world of a disposition on your parts to sever yourselves from the executive, and especially from the judicial administration of Ireland as it was carried on by Spencer under the late Government. You may question my title to attempt interference with your free action by the expression of such a hope, and I am not careful to assure you in this matter or certain that I can make good such a title in argument. But we have been for five years in the same boat, on most troubled waters, without having during the worst three years of the five a single man of the company thrown overboard. I have *never* in my life known the bonds of union so strained by the pure stress of circumstances; a good intent on all sides has enabled them to hold. Is there any reason why at this moment they should part? A rupture may come on questions of future policy; I am not sure that it will. But if it is to arrive, let it come in the course of nature as events develop themselves. At the present moment there appears to be set up an idea of difference about matters which lie in the past, and for which we are all plenarily responsible. The position is settled in all its elements, and cannot be altered. The frightful discredit with which the new Government has covered itself by its treatment of Spencer has drawn attention away from the signs of at least passive discord among us, signs which might otherwise have drawn upon us pretty sharp criticism. It appears to me that hesitation on the part of any of us as to our own responsibility for Spencer's acts can only be mischievous to the party and the late Cabinet, but will and must be far more mischievous to any who may betray such disinclination. Even with the Irish party it can, I imagine, do nothing to atone for past offences, inasmuch as it is but a negative proceeding; while from Randolph, Hicks Beach, and Gorst, positive support is to be had in what I cannot but consider a foolish as well as guilty crusade against the administration of criminal justice in Ireland; which may possibly be defective, but, with all its defects, whatever they may be, is, I apprehend, the only defence of the life and property of the poor. It will be the legislation of the future, and not this most unjust attack upon Spencer, which will have to determine hereafter your

relations with Ireland, and the 'National' party. I may be wrong, but it seems to me easy, and in some ways advantageous, to say: 'My mind is open to consider at large any proposals acceptable to Ireland for the development and security of her liberties, but I will not sap the foundations of order and of public right by unsettling rules, common to all parties, under which criminal justice has been continuously administered, and dragging for the first time the prerogative of mercy within the vortex of party conflict.' I dare say I may have said too much in the way of argument on a matter which seems to me hardly to call for argument, but a naked suggestion would have appeared even less considerate than the letter which I have written, prompted by strong feeling and clear conviction.

'"Yours sincerely,

'"W. E. GLADSTONE."

'I sent the letter to Chamberlain, asking whether he thought he could say at Hackney, where he was about to speak, anything flattering to Spencer, and he replied: "I am not certain that I shall say anything about Spencer; at most it would be only a personal tribute."'

With these words ends the story of Sir Charles Dilke's official relations with his party.

* * * * *

Looking back on that story, Sir George Trevelyan writes: "I never knew a man of his age—hardly ever a man of any age—more powerful and admired than was Dilke during his management of the Redistribution Bill in 1885." This influence had been built up by the long years of sustained work, of which the story has been told in his own words.

He combined two unusual characteristics: he was one of the Radical leaders at home, and he also carried extraordinary authority on the subject of foreign affairs both here and on the Continent.

The depth of his convictions as a Radical is attested by a note to Mr. Frank Hill,* editor of the *Daily News*: 'As a *man* I feel going out on this occasion very much

* Undated, but evidently written about this time.

indeed, but Chamberlain and I are trustees for others, and from the point of view of English Radicalism I have no doubt." Yet Radicalism never fettered his capacity for working with all men for the great questions which are beyond party, and uniting their efforts on big issues of foreign policy.

It was this gift which frequently made him more the spokesman of the House of Commons than of party in Government counsels. The approval of the House of Commons was, in his opinion, essential to the development of foreign policy, and his views as to the undesirability of unnecessary concealment were strong. While recognizing that everything could not be disclosed, he thought that the House of Commons should be in the Government's confidence as far as possible in diplomatic relations, and he looked on the tendency to surround all official proceedings with secrecy as more worthy of a bureaucrat than a statesman. Bismarck, Dilke said in 1876, was the diplomatist of foreign Europe who was never believed because he told the truth. He had no sympathy with the isolation of Great Britain, which had been a feature of our policy during his early career. But when Lord Beaconsfield would have plunged into a war with Russia in 1878, without an ally or a friend, he opposed that policy as suicidal. Of that policy he said at that time: "English Radicals of the present day do not bound their sympathies by the Channel . . . a Europe without England is as incomplete, and as badly balanced, and as heavily weighted against freedom, as that which I, two years ago, denounced to you—a Europe without France. The time may come when England will have to fight for her existence, but for Heaven's sake let us not commit the folly of plunging into war at a moment when all Europe would be hostile to our armies—not one Power allied to the English cause."* The keynote of his policy was friendship with France. His experience in the Franco-German War had for ever changed the friendly impression which led him first to follow the German forces into the field.

* Vol. I., Chapter XVI., p. 239.

Germany at war and Germany in a conquered country taught him in 1870–71 a lesson never to be forgotten, and affected his whole attitude to that Great Power. It has been seen how in the eighties he opposed, to the point of contemplated resignation of office, the Governmental tendency to accept German aggression—"to lie down" under it, as he said; and he fought for the retention of the New Guinea Coast and Zanzibar in 1884–85, as later he fought against Lord Salisbury as to the surrender of Heligoland.*

It was this courage as well as consistency of policy that bound Gambetta to him, and made Bismarck wish that he should be sent to Berlin at a critical moment in 1885 "to have a talk."† Strong men recognize one another.

* *Present Position of European Politics*, p. 242.
† *Life of Lord Granville*, vol. ii., p. 439.

CHAPTER XLIII

THE TURNING-POINT

JULY, 1885, TO JULY, 1886

οὐ θρύον, οὐ μαλάχην ἄνεμός ποτε, τὰς δὲ μεγίστας
*ἢ δρύας ἢ πλατάνους οἶδε χαμαὶ κατάγειν.**
LUCIAN IN "ANTHOLOGIA."

I.

WHEN Mr. Gladstone's Ministry left office in the summer of 1885, there seemed to be in all England no man for whom the future held out more assured and brilliant promise than Sir Charles Dilke. He was still young, not having completed his forty-second year; in the Cabinet only Lord Rosebery was his junior; he had seventeen years of unremitting Parliamentary service to his credit, and in the House of Commons his prestige was extraordinary. His own judgment and that of all skilled observers regarded his party's abandonment of office as temporary: the General Election would inevitably bring them back with a new lease of power, and with an Administration reorganized in such fashion that the Radicals would no longer find themselves overbalanced in the shaping of policy. The Dilke-Chamberlain alliance, which had during the past five years been increasingly influential, would in the next Parliament become openly authoritative; and, as matters looked at the moment, it was Sir Charles, and not Mr. Chamberlain, who seemed likely to take the foremost place.

Chamberlain's dazzling popular success had been of the kind to which a certain unpopularity attaches. Moderate men of both parties were prone to impute it to demagogism, and Dilke was in the fortunate position of seeing those

* It is not the rush or mallow that the wind can lay low, but the largest oaks and plane-trees.

Radical principles for which he stood advocated by his ally with a force of combined invective and argument which has had few parallels in political history, while to him fell the task, suited to his temperament, of reasoned discussion. Those who denounced Chamberlain's vehemence could hardly fail to point a comparison with Dilke's unfailing courtesy, his steady adherence to argument, his avoidance of the appeal to passion. Some strong natures have the quality of making enemies, some the gift for making friends, outside their own immediate circle, and Sir Charles Dilke possessed the more genial endowment.

This capacity for engendering good-will in those whom he encountered certainly did not spring from any undue respect of persons. Members of the Royal Family, whose privileges he had assailed, were constant in their friendliness; high Tories such as Lord Salisbury, whose principles he combated on every platform, liked him, and were not slow to show it. On the other hand, the friendship which Sir Charles inspired did not proceed, as is sometimes the case, from a mere casual bounty of nature. In Parliament his colleagues liked him, but this, assuredly, was not without cause. No member of the Ministry had given so much service outside his own department. Lord Granville wrote at this time: "I have not seen you alone since the smash, or I should have told you how much I feel the support you have given me both when we were together at the F.O. and quite as much since. I shall not soon forget it." Sir William Harcourt at the Home Office, Sir Henry James in the conduct of the Corrupt Practices Bill, had been beholden to him for no ordinary assistance. Moreover, as he was good to work with, so he was good to work under. Those who served him at the Local Government Board remember him as in no way prompt to praise; but if a suggestion was made to him, he never failed to identify it with the suggester, recognizing its source in adopting it. If he made a mistake and was set right, he admitted his error—a trait very rare in Ministers, who feel that they have constantly as amateurs to direct the decision of experts, and

are therefore chary of such admissions. Sir Charles always gave his men their due, and he took care that they should not be treated as machines. When colleagues called on him at his office, and found him with one of his staff, he never allowed the subordinate to be ignored in greetings. The Minister in a hurry would be stopped with, "I think you know So-and-so." These are small matters to set down, but by such small things men indicate their nature; and one of the oldest servants in that office summed up the matter in a sentence which is not the less interesting because it brings in another name. "When Sir Charles Dilke was at the Local Government Board," he said, "the feeling towards the President, from the heads of departments down to the messengers in the hall, was the same as it was in the time of Mr. Walter Long, and I can say no more than that."

Nobody, perhaps, has a better right to be counted fortunate than a man who can feel that he is strong, that he is liked, and that he is successfully promoting principles of government for his fellow-countrymen in which he sincerely believes. In July, 1885, Sir Charles Dilke had all these grounds for satisfaction, and in no common measure. Of course there were anxieties, politically speaking; Mr. Gladstone's future course of action was uncertain, and Mr. Gladstone was so great a force that he might at any time derange all calculations—as, in point of fact, he did. Still, time was on the side of the Radicals, and from day to day they held what they called "cabals" of the group formed by Chamberlain, Shaw-Lefevre, Trevelyan, Morley, and Dilke himself. At these meetings Sir Charles regularly presided.

The work of the Commission on Housing was in its last stages; its chairman was able to announce on July 1st, when laying the foundation-stone of some artisans' dwellings in Hoxton, that the Commission's Bill would be introduced in the Lords by Lord Salisbury, and that he himself would have charge of it in the Commons. For a man who had so laboured during the past five years such duties as these were child's play, and Sir Charles

was able for the first time for many months to take his share in social enjoyments. He dined repeatedly at Grillion's; he went to parties at famous houses both of his political allies and political opponents; above all, he found time for restful days upon his beloved river. He went to Henley in that July with his old rowing comrade Steavenson "to see Bristowe's fine Trinity Hall eight"; he spent Sunday, July 12th, at Dockett in company with Mr. Cyril Flower; and for the next Sunday, the 19th, he was engaged to be at Taplow Court with Mr. W. H. Grenfell, famous among oarsmen. But of that day more has to be written.

Throughout the month one dark cloud had hung over him: Mrs. Pattison was grievously ill in the Madras hills, and not until the fourth week in July did he know even the nature of her illness. It was typhoid, and it left her weak to face what had to come, like a "bolt from the blue," upon her and her future husband. Her first marriage had brought her discipline rather than happiness; now in the middle years of life her vivid nature was blossoming out again in the promise of union with a man before whom there lay open an illustrious career. Illness struck her down, and while she lay convalescent there came to her as black a message as ever tried the heart of any woman.

II.

On the evening of Saturday, July 18th, Sir Charles Dilke was entertained at a dinner given by the Reform Club—a very rare distinction—to celebrate the passing of the Redistribution Bill into law. From this ceremony, which crowned and recognized his greatest personal achievement, he returned late, and found at his house a letter from an old family friend who asked him to call on the following Sunday morning on grave business. He then learnt that the wife of a Liberal member of Parliament had volunteered a "confession" to her husband, in which she stated that she had been unfaithful to him with Sir Charles immediately after her marriage.

His note in his private diary on Sunday is: "19*th*.—Early heard of the charge against me. Put myself in hands of J. B. Balfour, and afterwards of Chamberlain and James."

Later Sir Charles Dilke went down to Taplow, and spent the day there. This accusation found him separated from his future wife by many thousand miles; worse than that, she had been dangerously ill; the risk to her of a telegraphed message must be great; yet there was the chance from day to day that newspaper rumour might anticipate direct tidings from him to her. He was "in as great misery as perhaps ever fell upon a man."

He returned next morning to preside at the last meeting of the Commission on Housing, when, he says, "the Prince of Wales proposed a vote of thanks to me in an extremely cordial speech." From that attitude of friendliness the future King Edward never departed.

'I had a dinner-party in the evening, which was one of several in preparation for our Ward meetings in Chelsea, which I had to continue to hold in spite of my private miseries.

'I was engaged on the one night for which none of these dinners had been fixed to dine with Lord and Lady Salisbury, and to attend the Princess of Wales's Ball at Marlborough House, and I wrote to put off my engagements, for which I was much blamed; but I think that I was right.'

For three or four days Sir Henry James, Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. J. B. Balfour, the Lord Advocate of Mr. Gladstone's Ministry, moved to secure a court of inquiry which would act without prejudice to the right of legal action. But within the week it was certain that public proceedings would be taken.

The blow had come suddenly; it came with dramatic incidence at the moment when Sir Charles's prestige was most effectively recognized; and from the moment that it fell he knew that the whole tenor of his life was altered. On Thursday, July 23rd, four days afterwards, he wrote in his Diary of the time this judgment:

'Left for the last time the House of Commons, where I have attained some distinction. It is curious that only a week ago Chamberlain and I had agreed, at his wish and suggestion, that I should be the future leader, as being more popular in the House, though less in the country, than he was, and that only three days ago Mr. Gladstone had expressed the same wish. Such a charge, even if disproved, which is not easy against perjured evidence picked up with care, is fatal to supreme usefulness in politics. In the case of a public man a charge is always believed by many, even though disproved, and I should be weighted by it through life. I prefer, therefore, at once to contemplate leaving public life.'

Upon the first sentence of this he added in a marginal note, written after his marriage with Mrs. Mark Pattison, and after he had, in spite of that first decision, returned to the House of Commons: 'Chamberlain overpersuaded Emilia, and, through her, me, but he was wrong.'

Of honourable ambition Sir Charles Dilke had as much as any man. Yet in the innermost record of these days—in those letters which, not yet daring to despatch them, he wrote to his future wife—there is not a hint of his personal loss, not a word of the career that he saw broken. These things had no place in the rush of feeling which overwhelmed him, and left him for the moment unable to trust his own judgment or assert his own will.

Through the months of Mrs. Pattison's absence in India one note had been constant in his letters—the reiterated anticipation of what he hoped to bring her. Up to the middle of July his letters, apart from the news of his daily life, are filled with joyful forecast, not of his own happiness, but of his and hers together—of his happiness in seeing her happy. When the stroke fell, the note, even though it changed, was the same in essence: "I feel this may kill you—and it will kill me either if it kills you or if you don't believe me.'

That was written down within an hour after he had the news. Never afterwards did he consider the possibility of her failing him.

The next day he wrote:

"TAPLOW COURT, TAPLOW,
"*July* 20*th*.

"The only thing I can do in future is to devote myself entirely to *you* and helping in your work. To that the remainder of my life must be dedicated. I fancy you will have the courage to believe me whatever is by madness and malevolence brought against me. . . ."

He wrote again:

"The less you turn from me, and the more you are true—and of course you will be all true . . .—the more misery and not the less is it to me to bring these horrors on you. This thing is not true, but none the less do I bring these horrors on you."

So desperate was the tumult in Sir Charles Dilke's mind that Mr. Chamberlain strove to tranquillize him by a change of scene. Some spot, such as is to be found in Sir Charles's own holiday land of Provence, at first occurred to his friend, though this would have meant the cancelling of all Mr. Chamberlain's public engagements at that most critical moment in politics. But Sir Charles instead went down to Highbury, where he passed his days much in the open air, playing lawn tennis and riding with his host's son, Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

Here he rapidly came back to something of his normal self. As news had been telegraphed of Mrs. Pattison's gradual recovery, it was decided to inform her of what had happened. Mr. Chamberlain undertook the delicate task of wording the communications. She telegraphed back at once that full assurance of her trust and of her loyalty on which Sir Charles had counted. But it was characteristic of her not to stop there. A telegram from Mrs. Pattison to the *Times* announcing her engagement to Sir Charles Dilke immediately followed on public intimation of the proceedings for divorce. Lord Granville wrote to Sir Charles: "I wish you joy most sincerely. The announcement says much for the woman whom you have chosen."

Yet days were to come when the storm was so fierce about

Sir Charles Dilke and "the woman whom he had chosen" that few cared to face it in support of the accused man and the wife who had claimed her share in his destiny.

When those days came, they found no broken spirit to meet them. Through his affections, and only through his affections, this man could be driven out of his strongholds of will and judgment; when that inner life was assured, he faced the rest with equanimity. He writes:

"*August 28th.*—I continue to be much better in health and spirit. I was five and a half weeks more or less knocked over; I am strong and well, and really happy in you and for you, and confident and all that you could wish me to be these last few days."

Mrs. Pattison, before she left Ceylon on her way to England, sent him a telegram, the reply to which was written to meet her at Port Said: "Nothing ever made me so happy. . . . Though it has been a frightful blow, I am well now; and the blow was only a blow to me because of you."

At first sympathy and support were proffered in ample measure. On being formally notified of proceedings in the divorce case, he wrote at once a letter to the Liberal Association of Chelsea, in which he declared that the charge against him was untrue and that he looked forward with confidence to the result of a judicial inquiry; but at the same time he offered to withdraw his candidature for the seat at the forthcoming election, if the Council thought him in the circumstances an undesirable candidate. To this offer the Council replied by reiterating their confidence in him. About the same time, yielding to Chamberlain's advice, he returned to the House of Commons while the Housing Bill was in Committee, and took part in the proceedings as usual.

The Prince of Wales, to whom he communicated news of his engagement before the public announcement, wrote warm congratulations and wishes for dispersal of the overhanging trouble. Mr. Gladstone, who had frequent occasion to write to him on public business, in one of these

political letters added congratulations on the engagement, though he had made no allusion to the Divorce Court proceedings. But Mr. Gladstone's chief private secretary, Sir Edward Hamilton, had written at the first publication of them this assurance:

"You may depend upon it that your friends (among whom I hope I may be counted) are feeling for you and will stand by you; and, if I am not mistaken, I believe your constituents will equally befriend you; indeed, I am convinced that the masses are much more fair and just than the upper classes. Anything that interfered with your political career would not only be a political calamity, but a national one; and I do not for a moment think that any such interference need be apprehended."

This letter represented the attitude that was generally observed towards Sir Charles Dilke by political associates till after the first trial.

Mr. Chamberlain's support was unwavering, though there were some who anticipated that the misfortunes of the one man might disastrously affect the political career of the other.

It is true that by the amazing irony of fate which interpenetrated this whole situation the Tories gained in Mr. Chamberlain their most powerful ally, and that Sir Charles had to encounter all the accumulated prejudice which the "unauthorized programme" had gathered in Tory bosoms. But none of these things could be foreseen when Chamberlain, then in the full flood of his Radical propaganda, invited Sir Charles to make his temporary home at Highbury. Here, accordingly, he stayed on through August and the early part of September, breaking his stay only by two short absences. There still lived on at Chichester old Mr. Dilke's brother, a survivor of the close-knit family group, preserving the same intense affectionate interest in Charles Dilke's career. To him this blow was mortal. Sir Charles paid him in the close of August his yearly visit: ten days later he was re-

called to attend the old man's funeral in the Cathedral cloisters.

In the middle of September he crossed to France, and waited at Saint Germain for Mrs. Pattison, who reached Paris in the last days of the month. On October 1st Sir Charles crossed to London; she followed the next day, and on the 3rd they were married at Chelsea Parish Church. Mr. Chamberlain acted as best man.

III.

Return to England meant a return to work. The General Election was fixed for November; and from August onwards Dilke had been drawn back by correspondents and by consultations with Chamberlain into the stream of politics, which then ran broken and turbulent with eddies and cross-currents innumerable. Chamberlain, sustaining alone the advanced campaign, wrote even before the marriage to solicit help at the earliest moment; and from October onwards the two Radicals were as closely associated as ever—but with a difference. Circumstances had begun the work of Sir Charles's effacement.

When the election came, his success was personal; London went against the Liberals, his old colleague Mr. Firth failed, so did Mr. George Russell in another part of the borough, which was now split into several constituencies; but Chelsea itself stood to its own man. The elections were over on December 19th. Before that date it was apparent that the Irish party held the balance of power, and Mr. Gladstone had already indicated his acceptance of Home Rule.*

Parliament met early, and by January 28th, 1886, the Tory Government had resigned. Mr. Gladstone, in framing his new Administration, thought it impossible to include a man suffering under a charge yet untried, and wrote:

* Chapter XLV., p. 196.

"My dear Dilke, "*February 2nd*, 1886.

"I write you, on this first day of my going regularly to my arduous work, to express my profound regret that any circumstances of the moment should deprive me of the opportunity and the hope of enlisting on behalf of a new Government the great capacity which you have proved in a variety of spheres and forms for rendering good and great service to Crown and country.

"You will understand how absolutely recognition on my part of an external barrier is separate from any want of inward confidence, the last idea I should wish to convey.

"Nor can I close without fervently expressing to you my desire that there may be reserved you a long and honourable career of public distinction.

"Believe me always,
"Yours sincerely,
"W. E. Gladstone."

Less than a fortnight later the divorce case was heard: the charge against Sir Charles was dismissed with costs, the Judge saying expressly that there was no case for him to answer.

The Prime Minister's attitude made it inevitable that while the case was untried Sir Charles should be excluded from the new Ministry; but not less inevitably his position before the world was prejudiced by that exclusion. Had Parliament met, as it usually meets, in February; had the whole thing so happened that the judgment had been given before the Ministry came to be formed, exclusion would have been all but impossible. We may take it that Mr. Chamberlain would have insisted on Sir Charles's inclusion as a condition of his own adherence; it would have been to the interest of every Gladstonian and of every follower of Chamberlain to maintain the judgment. As it was, the effect of Sir Charles's exclusion had been to prepare the way for a vehement campaign directed against him by a section of the Press.

By the law a wife's confession of misconduct is evidence against herself, entitling the husband to a divorce; but if unsupported by other witnesses it is no evidence against the co-respondent. But a question arose which afterwards

became of capital importance. Should Sir Charles go into the witness-box, deny on oath the unsworn charges made against him, and submit himself to cross-examination? His counsel decided that there was no evidence to answer; they did not put their client into the box, and the course was held by the Judge to be the correct one.

In reply to the Attorney-General's representation that there was no case whatever which Sir Charles Dilke was called to answer, Mr. Justice Butt said that he could not see the shadow of a case. In his judgment he said: "A statement such as has been made by the respondent in this case is not one of those things which in common fairness ought for one moment to be weighed in the balance against a person in the position of Sir Charles Dilke. Under these circumstances, I have no hesitation whatever in saying that counsel have been well advised in suggesting the course which they have induced Sir Charles Dilke to take, and the petition, as against him, must be dismissed with costs."

Dilke himself notes: 'On Friday, February 12th, the trial took place, and lasted but a short time, Sir Henry James and Sir Charles Russell not putting me into the box, and Sir Charles Butt almost inviting them to take that course. Lord Granville had written to me: "Will you forgive my intruding two words of advice? Put yourself unreservedly into the hands of someone who, like our two law officers, unites sense with knowledge of the law." I had done this, and had throughout acted entirely through James, Russell, and Chamberlain. In court and during the remainder of the day, Chamberlain, James, and Russell, were triumphant. . . .'

For the moment it seemed as if misfortune had ended in triumph. Congratulations poured in upon both Sir Charles and his wife; the official leaders welcomed the judgment. Mr. Chamberlain sent an express message to Downing Street: "Case against Dilke dismissed with costs, but the petitioner has got his divorce against his wife." Mr. Gladstone answered: "My dear Chamberlain, I have received your prompt report with the utmost pleasure." Sir William Harcourt wrote direct:

"DEAR DILKE,—So glad to hear of the result and of your relief from your great trouble.—Yours ever, W. V. H."

Lady Dilke's friends wrote to her, congratulating her on the reward that her courage and her loyalty had reaped.

But in Sir Charles's Diary of that date, where notes of any personal character are few indeed, this is written on the day after the case was heard, in comment on the action of a certain section of the Press:

"Renewed attempt to drive me out of public life. But I won't go now. In July I said to Emilia and to Chamberlain: 'Here is the whole truth—and I am an innocent man; but let me go out quietly, and some day people will be sorry and I shall recover a different sort of usefulness.' They would not let me go. Now I won't go."

A man other than innocent would have rested on the strong judgment in his favour and let agitation die down, but the attacks continued and Dilke would not wait their passing. Chamberlain was included in these attacks, 'for having kept me out of the box,' and wrote in reply to Sir Charles: "I was only too glad to be able in any way to share your burdens, and if I can act as a lightning conductor, so much the better. . . . Of course, if *you* were quite clear that you ought to go into the box, it is still possible to do so, either by action for libel or probably by intervention of the Queen's Proctor."

'This was the first suggestion made to me of any possibility of a rehearing of the case . . . and though Hartington, James, and Russell, were all under the impression that I should find no further difficulty, it was the course which I ultimately took,' and which he pressed on with characteristic tenacity. And here laymen may be permitted to marvel at the fallibility of eminent lawyers. 'No one, of all these great lawyers,' foresaw the position in which he would be placed as a result of his application. Yet from the moment that this procedure was adopted it was possible that he might be judged without those resources of defence which are open to the meanest subject charged with an offence.

In March Sir Charles Dilke applied to the Queen's Proctor for his intervention in order that the case might be reheard. The application failed. In April he moved again, this time by a public letter, and this time the Queen's Proctor yielded. Application was made in the Court of Probate and Divorce to the President, Sir James Hannen, that Sir Charles Dilke should be made a party to the intervention or reinstated in the suit.

The President laid down that Sir Charles was no party to the suit, and had now no right to appear except as a witness, and might not be represented by counsel. The question was then taken to the Court of Appeal, but, on strictly technical grounds, the Court held that Sir Charles was no longer a party, and that he could not be allowed to intervene. Thus the first judgment, by declaring him innocent and awarding him costs as one unjustly accused, led straight to his undoing. He had been struck out of the case; he was now a mere member of the general public. There never were, probably, legal proceedings in which from first to last law and justice were more widely asunder.

Sir Charles Dilke was, in fact, in the position from which Sir Henry James had sought to protect him—the position described in the course of his pleading for reinstatement:

"I have no desire to put forward any claim for my client other than one founded on justice, but I cannot imagine a more cruel position than that in which Sir Charles Dilke would be placed in having a grave charge against him tried while the duty of defending his interest was committed to hands other than those of his own advisers."

The consequences which flowed from the technical construction put upon the situation were these: In reality Sir Charles Dilke was the defendant on trial for his political life and his personal honour. Yet although Sir Henry James and Sir Charles Russell were there in court ready briefed, neither was allowed to speak. Dilke's case against his accuser had to be dealt with by the counsel for the Queen's Proctor, Sir Walter Phillimore, who, though

a skilled ecclesiastical lawyer, was comparatively inexperienced in the cross-examination of witnesses and in Nisi Prius procedure, and was opposed by Mr. Henry Matthews, the most skilled cross-examiner at the bar. Sir Walter Phillimore also stated publicly, and properly, that it was not his "duty to represent and defend Sir Charles Dilke." So strictly was this view acted upon that Sir Charles did not once meet Sir Walter Phillimore in consultation; and witnesses whom he believed to be essential to his case were never called. But that was not all. According to the practice of that court, all the information given by Dilke was at once communicated to the other side; but as Sir Charles was not a party to the suit, the Queen's Proctor did not communicate to him what he learned from that other side.

In an ordinary trial the witnesses of the accusers are heard first. And this order is recognized as giving the greatest prospect of justice, since if the defence is first disclosed the accuser may adjust details in the charge so as, at the last moment, to deprive the defence of that fair-play which the first order of hearing is designed to secure. The only possible disproof which Sir Charles could offer was an alibi. It was of vital importance to him that the accusation should be fixed to dates, places, days, hours, even minutes, with the utmost possible precision. Then he might, even after the lapse of years, establish the falsity of a charge by proof that he was elsewhere at the time specified. But in this case, owing to the form that the proceedings took, the opportunity which of right belongs to the defence was given to the accuser. The accusation being technically brought by the Queen's Proctor, who alleged that the divorce had been obtained by false evidence, Sir Charles Dilke was produced as his witness, and had at the beginning of the proceedings to disclose his defence.

Further, and even more important, the issue put to the jury was limited in the most prejudicial way.

"On the former occasion," said Sir James Hannen, "it was for the petitioner to prove that his wife had committed

adultery with Sir Charles Dilke." (This, as has been seen, the petitioner failed to prove against Sir Charles Dilke; the petitioner had to pay Sir Charles's costs.) "On this occasion it is for the Queen's Proctor to prove that the respondent did not commit adultery with Sir Charles Dilke."

How this negative was to be proved in any circumstances it is difficult to see, and under the conditions Sir Charles had no chance to attack the accusation brought against him.

Sir Charles's own comment in his Diary of the time was:

"*July* 16*th*.—My case tried again. I not a party, and—though really tried by a kind of Star Chamber—not represented, not allowed to cross-examine, not allowed to call witnesses; and under such circumstances the trial could have but one result, which was that the jury, directed to decide if they were in doubt that the Queen's Proctor had not established his case, would take that negative course. The trial lasted from Friday, 16th, to Friday, 23rd, inclusive, and the jury decided, as they could not have helped deciding, and as I should have decided had I been one of them."

The situation may be thus summed up:

In the first trial the petitioner failed to produce any legal evidence whatever of the guilt of Sir Charles Dilke; in the second the Queen's Proctor failed to prove his innocence.*

The verdict of the jury at the second trial was not a verdict of Guilty against Sir Charles; it was a declaration that his innocence was not proven, the question put to the Jury by the clerk after their return into Court following the words of the Act of Parliament, and being whether the decree nisi for the dissolution of the marriage of the petitioner and the respondent was obtained contrary to the justice of the case by reason of material facts not being brought to the knowledge of the Court. The Jury's answer followed the same words.† When we add to that the conditions under which the question was tried, we see that they were such as to make the proof of innocence impossible.

Those about Sir Charles at this time remember how even

* Technically the verdict, by dismissing the Queen's Proctor's intervention, confirmed the original judgment, which dismissed Sir Charles from the case.

† See report in *Daily News*, Saturday, July 24th, 1886.

at that bitter moment he began to look round for any method by which his case might be reheard. He wrote to Sir Henry James that it would be a proper course for himself to invite a trial for perjury; and though Lady Dilke was so ill "from sick and sleepless nights" that she had been ordered at once to Royat, he waited for three weeks before accompanying her abroad, to give time for action to be taken, and wrote to Sir Richard Webster (then Attorney-General) practically inviting a prosecution.

He did not abandon hope of a rehearing, and worked for many years in the trust that the evidence accumulated by himself and his friends might be so used, nor did he cease his efforts till counsel in consultation finally assured him "that no means were open to Sir Charles Dilke to retry his case."

Sir Eyre Crowe, a friend valued for his own as well as for his father's sake (Sir Joseph Crowe, to whom Sir Charles was much attached), wrote at the time of Sir Charles's death: "How he bore for long years the sorrow and misfortunes of his lot had something heroic about it. I only once talked to him about these things, and was intensely struck by his Roman attitude." It was the only attitude possible to such a man. Placed by his country's laws in the situation of one officially acquitted by a decision which was interpreted into a charge of guilt; forced then, in defence of his honour, into the position of a defendant who is debarred from means of defence; assured after long effort that no legal means were open to him to attempt again that defence, he solemnly declared his innocence, and was thereafter silent.

"By-and-by it will be remembered that as a fact the issue was never fairly represented and never fairly met," was the estimate of Sir Francis Jeune, afterwards President of the Divorce Court. And from the first there were many lawyers and thinking men and women who would have endorsed it. From the first also there were those who believed Sir Charles's word. Among such faithful friends, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Sir Robert Collins, Mr. Cyril

Flower, Mrs. Westlake and Mr. Westlake, Q.C., Mr. Thursfield of the *Times*, Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Francis and Lady Jeune, Sir Charles's old college friend Judge Steavenson, stand out in memory. He himself says: 'I received after the trial . . . a vast number of letters from people who wrote to express their belief in me. Some, as, for example, from Dr. Hatch' (the eminent Oxford theologian) 'and his wife, and from Dr. Percival, Head-master of Rugby,* and his wife, were from firm friends of Emilia, brought to me by their belief in her; some from friends, some from political foes, of all sorts—all breathing confidence and devotion.'

Mr. Chamberlain wrote: "I feel bitterly my powerlessness to do or say anything useful at the present time." In such a case the testimony of intimates is weighty, and Sir John Gorst sent in June, 1913, his recollection of words used by Mr. Chamberlain in the autumn of 1886: "I assure you that, as a man of honour, I don't believe the charges made against him. If you had been in and out of his house at all times as I have been, you would see they were impossible."

Then as now there existed a certain body of opinion which would have discriminated between a man's private honour and his public usefulness, holding that the nation which throws aside a great public servant because of charges of personal immorality is confusing issues, and sacrificing the country's welfare to private questions. Whatever is to be said for this view, it was one to which Sir Charles Dilke wished to owe nothing. He did not share it, and those whose adherence he acknowledged were those who believed his word. From different sources, then, Sir Charles had found confidence and support, but they were small stay in that gradually accumulating torrent of misfortune.

As the Press campaign had developed in the spring, he found himself avoided in Parliament and in society. In the House, where a few months before he had again and again been the Government spokesman and representative, he was retired into the ranks of private members. This

* Dr. Percival was President of Trinity College, Oxford, till 1887, when he went to Rugby. He became Bishop of Hereford.

short Parliament of 1886 came to an end in June, and, in the General Election which followed, London went solidly against Home Rule; and Sir Charles, though as compared with other Gladstonian Liberals he did well, found himself rejected by the constituency which had stood by him in four contests. Such a reverse occurs in the life of almost every prominent politician, and, though harassing, is of no determining import. For Sir Charles Dilke at this moment it was a cruel blow. The personal discredit against which he had to fight coincided with the discredit of his party; and when the jury came to their decision in July, after a week in which the newspapers had been filled daily with columns of scandalous detail, public feeling assumed a character of bitter personal hostility.

"Sir Charles's fall," says the chronicler of that period, Mr. Justin McCarthy, "is like that of a tower. He stood high above every rising English statesman, and but for what has happened he must have been Prime Minister after Gladstone."*

* This article appeared in a Canadian journal after the second trial.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE RADICAL PROGRAMME *VERSUS* HOME RULE

JULY TO DECEMBER, 1885.*

THE period between July, 1885, and July, 1886, determined the course of English history for a generation. At the beginning of this period, Sir Charles Dilke was one of the three men on the Liberal side who, after Mr. Gladstone, counted most, and he commanded more general approval than either Chamberlain or Hartington. But from the first rumour of his personal misfortune his influence rapidly dwindled; when the period closed, many of those who had been his political associates had left him, and from Mr. Chamberlain, in political life, he was irretrievably sundered.

In July, 1885, the much-talked-of visit of the Radical leaders to Ireland was abandoned, owing, it appears, to the change in Sir Charles's personal fortunes. Meanwhile the first-fruits of the Tory alliance with Parnellism had begun to appear, and on July 21st Mr. Gladstone had made, as has been seen,† a powerful appeal to his Radical colleagues for support of Lord Spencer—addressing it, after his invariable custom, to Dilke. It was the last time that he did so, and he wrote then without knowledge of the blow which had already fallen on Sir Charles.

In the end Mr. Gladstone's appeal was disregarded, and, when Lord Spencer's policy was assailed in the House, the

* This chapter and the next cover the same dates as the preceding chapter, which contains the record of other than political events, while these deal with the political history of the time.

† See p. 158.

Press noted the significant absence of Dilke and Chamberlain from the front bench. It would have been more significant had not Sir Charles been then engrossed with his personal concerns. Not until the last days of August was he "sufficiently recovered from the blow to be able to take some interest in politics"; and then it was merely to take an interest, not to take a part. Yet already the crucial question for Liberal policy had begun to define itself.

On August 24th, Parnell, speaking in Ireland, declared that the one plank in Ireland's platform was National independence. In reply, Lord Hartington, speaking at Waterfoot in Lancashire, declared his confidence that no British party would concede Parnell's demand. But Lord Hartington did not confine his speech to this.

'A speech by Hartington in Lancashire read to Chamberlain and myself like a declaration of war against the unauthorized programme and its author; and when Rosebery wrote to me to congratulate me on my coming marriage, I replied in this sense. I had a good deal of correspondence with James as to what should be the nature of Chamberlain's reply at Warrington on Tuesday, September 8th, James trying to patch up things: "The ransom theory* startled a good many people, and dissent from it was to be expected. But surely such dissent does not cause a man to be unfit to be in the Liberal ranks. . . ." James also sent me a memorandum from which I extracted the following sentence: "If it be once introduced as an admitted principle that no man can take office without stipulating for the success of every question to which he may have given a support, and if every man in Government is to be bound to reject all concessions to those with whom he has on any point ever differed, the practical constitution of this country would be overthrown. . . ." On September 5th Chamberlain had received a letter from Harcourt which I afterwards considered with him. . . . "I set store by your declaration that you will try to be as moderate as you can. You have

* Mr. Chamberlain on January 29th, 1885, at Birmingham: "I hold that the sanctity of public property is greater than even that of private property, and that, if it has been lost or wasted or stolen, some equivalent must be found for it, and some compensation may fairly be exacted from the wrongdoer." See Chapter XXXVIII., p. 105.

no idea how moderate you can be till you try. I am not the least despondent about the state of affairs. The Liberal party has a Pentecostian gift of tongues, and the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and others, require to have the gospel preached to them in very different languages. . . . I suppose that Rosebery reported to you his phrase that 'he had expressed himself on the land question more clumsily even than usual!' It is impossible to be angry with such frankness. . . .'"

Lord Rosebery had written at the same time to Sir Charles that the real trouble arose from 'clumsiness of arrangement,' and quoted Lord Hartington's words as accepting this view.

'John Morley wrote also on September 4th to Chamberlain that Goschen was rather wrathful that Hartington should be so slow and infrequent in speaking while he, Chamberlain, was so active, but that he did not believe Hartington meant war.'

None adverted to the difficulty, which was nevertheless the central one, of reaching an agreement concerning an Irish policy. Mr. Morley was right when he said that there was not going to be "war" in the Liberal party over questions of English reform. The question which was to split the party was Ireland, and Chamberlain in his Warrington speech joined Hartington in repudiating Parnell's demand. But Mr. Chamberlain saw what Lord Hartington did not, that a Liberal party must have a positive policy, and his conception of a Liberal policy during these months was to force the pace on social questions and leave Ireland alone.

At these critical moments of August and September, 1885, Sir Charles was a guest in Mr. Chamberlain's house, and was in consultation with him; but it was a consultation to which one of the two brought a mind preoccupied with his own most vital concerns. Scarcely a month had gone by since the petition had been filed, in July, 1885; much less than a month since he had been on the very edge of a complete breakdown. He had been dragged back, almost against his will and against his judgment, into political life by that

imperious personality with which he had been so long associated in equal comradeship. Under the old conditions Sir Charles and Mr. Chamberlain would have inevitably influenced each other's action, and it is at least possible that Sir Charles's gift for bringing men together and concentrating on essentials might have altered the whole course of events. But it is clear, from what followed later, that under the conditions which existed there was no thorough discussion between them, since the line which Sir Charles took on Ireland when the dividing of the ways came was a surprise to his friend.

'On September 10th, 1885, there came a letter from Mr. Gladstone, addressed to Chamberlain and myself. Chamberlain replied, after consultation, in our joint names.'

They developed their views as to their programme of English as distinct from Irish reforms.

'Mr. Gladstone wished to issue an address (to his constituents with a view to the General Election), and had got Hartington to ask him to do so, and he now wanted us also to ask him. We stipulated that we must have (1) power to local authorities to take land for housing, allotments and so forth, and (2) free schools; otherwise, while we could not object to his issuing his own address, we could not offer to support or join a future Government.'

'On the 15th Chamberlain wrote to me to Paris that he gathered Mr. G. intended to issue immediately, without waiting his reply.'

He would write, however, asking for further allusions to compulsory powers for taking land, and asked Sir Charles to write direct about registration.

On September 20th Mr. Chamberlain wrote again, enclosing a copy of his letter to Mr. Gladstone, and stating his opinion that the manifesto was bad, and that he regarded it, especially the part referring to free schools and education,*

* Mr. Gladstone was never at any time in harmony with the views of the more advanced section of his own party on education. See the account of the curious controversy between him and Lord Russell during the last days of the latter's leadership of the Liberal party (*Life of Granville*, vol. i., pp. 516, 517).

as a slap in the face to himself and Sir Charles. He added that he had written frankly to Mr. Gladstone, telling him that he was dissatisfied, and expressed his opinion that Mr. Gladstone would give way, and that his reign could not last long. Through the somewhat involved phraseology of Mr. Gladstone's letter, it seemed possible to extract some hope in regard to extra powers for local authorities, and a revision of taxation in favour of the working classes. He concluded by saying that if his party could get a majority, he would make their terms on joining the Government, and regretting that Sir Charles was not still staying with him.

The letter to Mr. Gladstone spoke of the manifesto as a blow to the Radical party, and went on to say that, in the event of the Liberal party returning in full power to office, he would offer loyal support, as far as possible, to any Government that might be formed, but that the joining any Administration formed on the narrow basis of the programme now presented would be impossible. It ended with the words: "Dilke has left me, but, from a letter I have received from him, I am justified in saying that he shares my views."

'I told Chamberlain that in my first speech (and I had two to make shortly after my proposed marriage in October) I intended to attack Reform of the House of Lords from the Single Chamber point of view.'

He replied urging Sir Charles to give this question prominence and importance, and to do so in the name of the Radical Party, as expressing their policy, for fear that even Radical candidates should be under some misapprehension. He also authorized him to use his (Mr. Chamberlain's) name, as concurring in the views expressed.

'On the 25th I received a letter from Chamberlain containing Mr. Gladstone's reply:

'"My dear Chamberlain,

'"Were I engaged (which Heaven forfend) in the formation of a new Liberal Government, and were your

letter of yesterday an answer to some invitation to join it, then *I* should have read the letter with great regret; but I pointed out to you (as I think), in a previous letter, that it would (as far as I could judge) be an entire mistake to lay down a *credo* of Liberal policy for a new Government at the present juncture. You and Hartington were both demurring in opposite senses, and I made to each the same reply. My aim was for the election only, in giving form to my address. As to what lies beyond, I suppose the party will, so far as it has a choice, set first about the matters on which it is agreed. But no one is bound to this proposition.

'"Bright once said, with much force and sense, that the average opinion of the party ought to be the rule of immediate action.

'"It is likely that there may be a split in the party in the far or middle distance, but I shall have nothing to do with it, and you, I am sure, do not wish to anticipate it or force it on. What I have said may, I hope, mitigate any regret such as you seem to intimate.

'"I am at present busy on private affairs and papers, to which for six years past I have hardly given one continuous hour. Later on I should like much to explain to you my personal views and intentions in conversation. It would be difficult to do so in writing. They turn very much upon Ireland—the one imperial question that seems at present possible to be brought into immediate view. But, for Liberals generally, I should have thought that there was work enough for three or four years on which they might all agree. So far as my observation and correspondence go, I have not found that non-Whig opinion is offended.

'"Sincerely yours,

'"W. E. GLADSTONE

'"P.S.—A letter received from Dilke speaks pleasingly about the address.

'"I may say that I was quite unconscious of interfering with your present view, which I understood to be that none of your advanced proposals were to be excluded, but all left open for discussion.—W. E. G."

'On the passage with regard to Ireland I noted: "He means that he would go on as Prime Minister if he could see his way to carry the larger Local Government (Ireland) scheme, and not otherwise." But he meant more.'

Sir Charles also wrote suggesting that Mr. Chamberlain should, in his correspondence with Mr. Gladstone, go into the question of the Whig composition of Liberal Cabinets, and the latter promised "to say just what you suggest."

Those who occupied the centre position in the Liberal party were bewildered by divided counsels.

'On September 28th I received from Chamberlain a letter enclosing one from Harcourt. . . . He (Harcourt) dwelt upon the delicacy of Mr. Gladstone's position. "He (Mr. Gladstone) says, if he is not wanted, he will 'cut out,' and he doubts, I think, if either you or Hartington want him. But I hope in this he is mistaken; for he is wanted, and neither section can do without him. . . . When I spoke at Plymouth I knew nothing of the contents of his address, nor, indeed, that it was about to appear so soon, though, oddly enough, it came out the next day. I therefore spoke like a cat in walnut shells, and had, like a man who makes a miss at billiards, to 'play for safety.' I am quite with you on the subject of the acquisition of land by local authorities, and also on free education, which seem to be your two *sine qua nons*. As to what you say about remaining outside a new Liberal Government, forgive me for saying that is all nonsense. If a Liberal Government cannot be formed with you and Dilke, it certainly cannot be formed without you. You have acquired the right and the power to make your own conditions, and I am sure they will be reasonable ones." '

Sir William Harcourt omitted to consider the possibility of a Government being formed—as actually happened—while the charges against Sir Charles were still untried. Politically, he made an omission which was less natural; once more there is no reference to the Irish problem and its effect. Yet in Mr. Gladstone's mind it was daily becoming more insistent.

'On September 28th Chamberlain wrote enclosing a letter from Mr. Gladstone, and his reply:

'"My dear Chamberlain,

'"I felt well pleased and easy after receiving your note of the 21st, but there is a point I should like to put to

you with reference to your self-denying ordinance making the three points conditions of office.

'"Suppose Parnell to come back eighty to ninety strong, to keep them together, to bring forward a plan which shall contain in your opinion adequate securities for the union of the Empire, and to press this plan, under whatever name, as having claims to precedence (claims which could hardly be denied even by opponents), do you think no Government should be formed to promote such a plan, unless the three points were glued on to it at the same time? Do you not think you would do well to reserve elbow-room for a case like this? I hope you will not think my suggestion—it is not a question—captious and a man-trap. It is meant in a very different sense. A Liberal majority is assumed in it.

'"Yours sincerely,

'"W. E. GLADSTONE."'

When that letter reached Highbury, Sir Charles was in France, awaiting Mrs. Pattison's arrival from India. Mr. Chamberlain's reply was written without consultation on September 28th. In it he said that he had assumed that Local Government would be the first work of a Liberal Government, and that Bills for the three countries would be brought in together. Mr. Parnell's change of front would, he thought, have limited the proposals to the establishment of County Councils, with certain powers for the acquisition of land by Local Authorities. He thought it unlikely that Parnell would bring forward a scheme that any Liberal Government could support; but if he did, he would do all he could to assist the Government in dealing with it, whether from inside or outside the Cabinet.

Chamberlain further urged Dilke to lay stress on the determination of his party not to be "mere lay figures in a Cabinet of Goschens." He regarded his party as indispensable, and if the Government tried to do without them, they were determined to make trouble. He expressed an earnest wish that Sir Charles Dilke could be working with them; but he did not press this at the moment, if Sir Charles was taking a holiday after his marriage.

Dilke took the briefest of holidays; on October 6th, three days after his wedding, he spoke at Chelsea. After dwelling at length on Chamberlain's proposal to give powers of compulsory land purchase to local authorities, he asked for the widest form of elective self-government for Ireland consistent with the integrity of the Empire,* and went on to assume that the first session of the new Parliament would be "a Local Government session." In the following week 'I made an important speech at Halifax on Local Government which attracted much attention.' "Halifax will be all Local Government," he wrote to Mr. Frank Hill, "which is necessary, as it is clear that Balfour and Salisbury have cribbed my last year's Bill."

'I may note here that on October 6th, at my Chelsea meeting, George Russell told me that he had on the previous day induced Mr. Gladstone to send for Chamberlain to Hawarden. On October 7th Chamberlain wrote:

* "In my individual opinion, the natural crowning stone of any large edifice of local government must sooner or later be some such elective Local Government Board for each of the three principal parts of the United Kingdom and for the Principality of Wales, as I have often sketched out to you. As regards Ireland, we all of us here, I think, agree that the widest form of elective self-government should be conferred which is consistent with the integrity of the Empire. No one can justify the existence of the nominated official Boards which at present attempt to govern Ireland. I care not whether the Irish people are or are not at the moment willing to accept the changes we have to propose. If the present system is as indefensible as I think it, we should propose them all the same. If they are not at first accepted, our scheme will at least be seen and weighed, and we shall be freed from the necessity of appearing to defend a system which is obnoxious to every Liberal principle. I would ask you to remember some words in Mr. Ruskin's chapter on 'The Future of England,' in his *Crown of Wild Olive*, which are very applicable to the situation:—'In Ireland, especially, a vicious system has been so long maintained that it has become impossible to give due support to the cause of order without seeming to countenance injury.' The bodies which would deal with education, with private Bills, with provisional order Bills, and with appeals from local authorities in matters too large for county treatment, in Wales and Scotland and England itself, if I had my way, as well as in Ireland, would, I believe, make the future government of the United Kingdom, as a United Kingdom, more easy than it is at present."

'"HAWARDEN CASTLE.

'"MY DEAR DILKE,

'"I was sent for here, but up to now I do not know why. . . . My present object is to say that you made a capital speech, and that I approve every word of it except the part about London Government. But as to this I suppose that Londoners must have their way and their own form of municipal government, though I doubt if it will not prove a fatal gift. Why will the papers invent differences between you and me? I verily believe that if I spoke your speech, and you spoke mine, they would still find the distinguishing characteristics of each speaker unchanged. I thought your last part admirable and just what I should have said. Yet the *Standard* thinks it quite a different note to the South London and Bradford speeches. Mr. G. thinks Mr. Parnell's last speech more satisfactory. I confess I had not perceived the improvement. He (Mr. G.) is still very sweet on National Councils."

'On October 9th Chamberlain wrote:

'"I am not quite certain what was Mr. G.'s object in sending for me. I suppose he desired to minimize our conditions as far as possible. He was very pleasant and very well, with no apparent trace of his hoarseness. He spoke at considerable length on the Irish Question; said he was more than ever impressed with the advantages of the Central Council scheme, and had written strongly to that effect to Hartington. But I do not gather that he has any definite plan under present circumstances. He thought Parnell's last speech was more moderate (I confess I do not agree with him), and I suppose that if we get a majority his first effort will be to find a *modus vivendi*, and to enter into direct communications with this object.

'"As regards Radical programme I stuck to the terms of your speech, namely, first, compulsory powers for acquiring land to be inserted in the Local Government Bill. Second, freedom to speak and vote as we liked on questions of free schools. He boggled a good deal over this, and said it was very weakening to a Government; but I told him we could not honestly do less, and that I expected a large majority of Liberals were in favour of the proposal. We did not come to any positive conclusion, nor do I think that he has absolutely made up his mind, but the tone of the conversation implied that he was seeking to work with us, and had no idea of doing without us. At the close he spoke of

his intention to give up the leadership soon after the new Parliament met. I protested, and said that if he did this our whole attitude would be changed, and we must and should ask from Hartington much larger concessions than we were prepared to accept from him. I expect the force of circumstances will keep him in his place till the end, though I believe he is sincerely anxious to be free." '*

On October 17th Chamberlain wrote 'on another letter of Mr. Gladstone's, which I do not possess:

'"I do not think it is wise to do anything about Mr. G.'s letter on Ireland. I agree with your recollection of the matter. But Mr. G. is not far wrong, and we have our hands full of other things. The Irish business is not the first just now."

'About this time I was taken as arbitrator in a considerable number of disputed candidatures, in most of which I acted by myself, and in one, the Walworth case, with Chamberlain and John Morley.'

'I had been to see Manning, at his wish, with my wife, and he had spoken kindly about Chamberlain, on which I wrote to Chamberlain about him; and Chamberlain replied:

'"Our experience in the Irish Question has not been encouraging. We understood the Cardinal cordially to approve of my scheme of National Councils and to be ready to use his influence in any way to promote its acceptance. On our part we were prepared to press the question at any sacrifice, and to make the adoption of our scheme a condition of our membership of any future Government. And yet, when the time came to ask the Cardinal for his help, he refused categorically so small a matter as an introduction to the Irish Bishops, and, as I understood, on the ground that the Conservatives were in office. Would not the same influence prevail in the matter of education? Besides, I do not see what Cardinal Manning has to offer. The majority of English Catholics are Conservative, and no concession that it is in our power to make would secure their support for the Liberal party. I am therefore of opinion that the differences between us can only be decided by the constituencies."

'The Cardinal wrote concerning Chamberlain:

'"Mr. Chamberlain was good enough to send me his

* Mr. Gladstone's account of this interview is to be found in Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. iii., p. 224.

scheme for Local Government in Ireland, in which in the main I agree, and did all in my power to promote its acceptance. The Government went out, and you asked of me to promote what I called a 'Midlothian in Ireland,' under the eyes of the new Lord Lieutenant. (I wrote on this to Chamberlain: 'I answered this at the time and have done so again now.') Did Mr. Chamberlain understand my agreement with his scheme as carrying any consequences beyond that scheme or any solidarity in such an aggressive action against any party whatsoever in power? . . . In the matter in which he was courteous enough to make known his scheme to me, I have promoted it where and in ways he does not know."

'In a day or two there came another letter from Manning:

'"It is true you did disclaim a Midlothian; but I told you that I know my Irishmen too well, and believe that even Paul and Barnabas would have been carried away. Moreover, if you had been silent as fishes, the moral effect would have been a counter-move. Your humility does not admit this. So you must absolve me for my one word."'

Mr. Chamberlain commented in strong terms on the diplomatic methods of the great ecclesiastic. The "counter-move" implied that there had been a Tory move in the direction of Home Rule with a view to securing Irish support. Manning believed, as Mr. Gladstone also believed, that the Tories meant business; later it became clear that they had no constructive Irish policy at all. Yet the question grew daily more pressing.

'At the end of October Chamberlain wrote:

'"I had a note from Mr. G. this morning urging unity, and saying he had an instinct that Irish questions 'might elbow out all others.' This makes me uneasy. I hear from another source that he is trying to get Parnell's ideas in detail. It is no use."'

To Mr. Gladstone, Chamberlain wrote, on October 26th, that he could not see his way at all about Ireland. He emphasized his view that Ireland had better go altogether than the responsibilities of a nominal union be accepted, and that probably the majority of Liberals would not give

more than English Local Government; and that, if possible, Irish and English Local Government should be dealt with together. Unless the principle of the acquisition of land by local authorities was accepted, neither he nor Dilke nor Morley, nor probably Lefevre, could join the Government.

The strife between Chamberlain and Hartington was maintained, and Mr. Gladstone interposed by a letter to the Chief Whip, in which he advised the intervention of Lord Granville in view of "his great tact, prudence, and experience." On November 5th Mr. Chamberlain wrote to Sir Charles, enclosing Mr. Gladstone's letter, and adding:

"Mr. G.'s is the most definite proof I have had yet that he does not mean to quarrel with us. Lord Granville has just been here. He told me nothing about Ireland, but *I am convinced* that Mr. Gladstone has been trying to make a treaty all to himself. It must fail."

No such treaty was made, and on the eve of the General Election of November, 1885, Parnell issued an instruction that the Irish in England should vote Tory.

'On Tuesday, November 24th, our poll took place in Chelsea, and on Wednesday, November 25th, the count, which showed that I was returned, although only by a small majority. . . . The Irish had voted for Whitmore, the Conservative candidate, my opponent, in consequence of the issue at the last moment of the bill, "Mr. Parnell's order—Vote for the Conservative, Mr. Whitmore. Irishmen, do your duty and obey your leader."'

'I had been summoned by Chamberlain, who desired a meeting of our party within the party, in a letter in which he said:

'"It does not look as if the Tories would have the chance of doing much mischief; but I should much like them to be in for a couple of years before we try again, and then I should 'go for the Church.'"'

Dilke notes that Chamberlain was persuaded to drop this line of attack, on which he had already embarked. Disestablishment of the Church of England had proved to be anything but a good election cry; the ransom doctrine had not brought in more votes than it lost; and the 366

certain Liberal seats with twenty-six doubtful ones which Mr. Schnadhorst counted up at the end of October were now an illusion of the past. The election was generally taken as a set-back to the extreme Radicals.

'On Saturday, December 5th, we met at Highbury, and remained in council until Monday, December 7th. Mr. Gladstone, we were informed (that is Morley, Lefevre, and myself), had presented a Home Rule scheme to the Queen, who had shown it to Lord Salisbury, and Randolph Churchill had told Lady Dorothy Nevill, who had told Chamberlain, but no statement had been made by Mr. Gladstone to his former colleagues.'

CHAPTER XLV

BEGINNING OF THE HOME RULE SPLIT

DECEMBER, 1885, TO FEBRUARY, 1886

AFTER the meeting of Radicals, December 5th to 7th, at Highbury, Sir Charles went back to London.

'On Wednesday, December 9th, I spoke at the Central Poor Law Conference. . . . I carried the assembly, which was one of Poor Law Guardians, and therefore Conservative, along with me in the opinion that it was desirable to elect directly the whole of the new bodies in local government, instead of having either a special representation of Magistrates or any system of indirect election or choice of Aldermen.'

He argued in the belief that the next session might still see a Tory Government in power. "If the Conservatives propose a Local Government Bill," he said at Chelsea, "it will be our Local Government Bill which they will propose." He notes: "They proposed two-thirds of it, and carried one-third, in 1888."

'At this moment, not knowing how far Mr. Gladstone was willing to go in the Home Rule direction, and that there was, therefore, any chance of his securing the real support of the Irish party, I was opposed to the attempt to turn out the Government and form a Liberal Administration resting on the support of a minority, and I spoke in that sense to my constituents. My view was that it would be disastrous to advanced Liberalism to form a Government resting on a minority, as it would be impossible to carry any legislation not of a Conservative type.'

'Chamberlain wrote to me on December 15th, with regard to one of my speeches, that I was too polite to the Tories. "This," he added, "is where I never err."

'On December 18th I received some copies of important

letters. Mr. Gladstone's scheme had got out on the 16th,* and on the 17th he wrote to Lord Hartington a letter of which the latter sent me a long extract.†

'At the same time I received a letter from Chamberlain in which he said:

'"Have I turned round? Perhaps I have, but it is unconsciously. Honestly I thought you went beyond us in your speeches, but I feel that your judgment is very likely better and certainly as good as mine, and I should have said nothing but for the flood of letters I received.

'"The situation changes every minute. The announcement of Mr. G.'s plan makes it much more serious; and I altered my speech somewhat to-night to meet it, but unless I have failed in my endeavour I have not said anything which will embarrass you, and I had you constantly in mind throughout. Please read it carefully and let me know exactly what you think and how far I have succeeded. I would not put you in a hole for a King's ransom if I could avoid it.

'"I agree entirely with you as to dissolution. The Tory game is to exaggerate Mr. Gladstone's performance and to go to the country on the 'integrity of the Empire.' I have endeavoured to reserve our position, and, as to taking office, to make it clear that we are opposed to it, unless we can get a big majority, which is impossible. Unless I am mistaken, the Gladstone business will exclusively occupy attention the next few days, and my speech will pass without much notice. But again I say that I have tried (and I hope and believe I have succeeded) to avoid

* Lord Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. iii., pp. 264, 265, shows that the "scheme got out" owing to Sir Charles Dilke's speech to his constituents. Mr. Herbert Gladstone came to town on the 14th partly in consequence of a speech "made a few days before by Sir Charles Dilke," and the talk it caused. The speech was "taken to mean" that the two Radical leaders preferred keeping the Tories in power "in the expectation that some moderate measures of reform might be got from them, and that meanwhile they would become committed with the Irishmen. Tactics of this kind were equivalent to the exclusion of Mr. Gladstone, for in every letter that he wrote he pronounced the Irish Question urgent." Accordingly, on December 16th there came the unauthorized version of Mr. Gladstone's scheme, given to the Press through his son.

† The letter, which has been printed both by Lord Morley and by Mr. Bernard Holland, is that in which Mr. Gladstone detailed the "conditions of an admissible plan" of Home Rule, and expressed a determination "on no account to do or say anything which would enable the Nationalists to establish rival biddings between us." It is so germane to this discussion that part of it is again printed in the appendix following this chapter (p. 208).

anything which may appear like contradiction or opposition to your line.

'"Finally, my view is that Mr. G.'s Irish scheme is death and damnation; that we must try and stop it; that we must not openly commit ourselves against it yet; that we must let the situation shape itself before we finally decide; that the Whigs are our greatest enemies, and that we must not join them if we can help it; that we cannot take office, but must not offer assistance to the Tories publicly; that we must say all we can as to their shameful bargain and surrender of principle; that even if they bring in good measures they will also bring in bad, which we shall be forced to oppose; and that the less we speak in public for the present, the better."

'I had told Chamberlain that his speech had given the impression that he had turned round.'

Sir Charles, in a further speech to his constituents at Chelsea, reaffirmed the principles which he had already publicly laid down.

'In speaking on the night of Friday, December 18th, at Chelsea, I declared that we ought not to allow ourselves to be driven either forward or backward from the principles that we had put forward with regard to Ireland, and that our course should be to continue to propose the measures which we had previously proposed without reference to the Parnellite support of Conservative candidates. The scheme which I had put forward at the General Election was the one to which I adhered. If it had been generally adopted when first suggested, it would have received very large support in Ireland.'

He then quotes from the report of his speech this sentence: "We are told that now it is too late, but for my part I should not be inclined to recede from it because it does not meet with general support."

On this Chamberlain wrote:

"*December 19th*, 1885.

"MY DEAR DILKE,

"The papers this morning seem to show that I have succeeded in avoiding any kind of conflict with you. Your own speech was most judicious. What a mess Mr. G. has made of it! What will be the end of it all? Why

the d—— could he not wait till Parnell had quarrelled with the Tories? I fancy that a large number, perhaps the majority, of Liberals will support *any* scheme of Mr. G.'s, but I doubt if the country will endorse it. The Tories, if they are wise, will throw everything else aside and go for the "Empire in danger," dissolving at the earliest possible opportunity. The Liberals would be divided and distracted, and I think we shall be beaten into a cocked hat. Our game—yours and mine—is to avoid definite committal for the moment. Circumstances change every hour. Harcourt is coming to me on Saturday and Sunday."

'On the next day Chamberlain sent me a copy of a letter to him from Mr. Gladstone:

'"*December* 18*th*, 1885.

'"MY DEAR CHAMBERLAIN,

'"I thank you very much for your references to me in your speech last night.

'"In this really serious crisis we must all make efforts to work together; and I gladly recognize your effort.

'"Moreover, reading as well as writing hastily, I think we are very much in accord.

'"Both reflection and information lead me to think that time is very precious, and that the hour-glass has begun to run for a definitive issue.

'"But I am certainly and strongly of opinion that only a Government can act, that especially this Government should act, and that we should now be helping and encouraging them to act as far as we legitimately can.

'"In reply to a proposal of the Central News to send me an interviewer, I have this morning telegraphed to London: 'From my public declarations at Edinburgh *with respect to the Government*, you will easily see that I have no communication to make.'

'"*Be very incredulous* as to any statements about my views and opinions. Rest assured that I have done and said *nothing* which in any way points to negotiation or separate action. The time may come, but I hope it will not. At present I think most men, but I do not include you, are in too great a hurry to make up their minds. Much may happen before (say) January 12th. The first thing of all is to know *what will the Government do?* I know they have been in communication with Parnellites, and I hope with Parnell.

'"I remain always,

'"Sincerely yours,

'"W. E. GLADSTONE."

'I fancy that I was the cause of Chamberlain receiving this letter, as I had told Brett (who at once wrote to Hawarden) that Chamberlain was angry at not having been consulted.'

'On December 21st we went down to Pyrford, which was now just finished, to stay there for the first time, and remained until Christmas Eve. On December 22nd I received a letter from Chamberlain from Highbury.'

In this letter Mr. Chamberlain chronicled Sir William Harcourt's visit—who, after 'raving against the old man and the old cause,' had left in better spirits. Mr. Chamberlain was in much doubt whether Mr. Gladstone would go on or would retire after Lord Hartington's letter to the Press,* and had written to Mr. Gladstone to say that he did not think the country would stand an independent Parliament. He saw nothing between National Councils and Separation, and wondered whether Mr. Gladstone thought that—in the event of a separate Irish Legislature—Ireland could be governed by a single Chamber, and England and Scotland by two.

'On December 26th Chamberlain wrote :

'"I do not envy you the opportunity of speaking on the 31st. It is a dangerous time, and I am inclined myself to 'lie low.' Is it desirable to say anything? If it is right to speak at all, I think something like a full exposé of motifs is necessary, and I put the following before you as the heads of a discourse.

'"At present there are two different ideas, for settlement of Ireland, before the public imagination, viz.: (A) National Councils; (B) Separation.

'"As to A, the fundamental principles are supremacy of Imperial Parliament and extension of local liberties on municipal lines. It is a feasible, practical plan. But it has the fatal objection that the Nationalists will not accept it. It is worse than useless to impose on them benefits which they repudiate. As to B, everyone professes to reject the idea of separation. If it were adopted, I have no doubt it would lead to the adoption of the conscription

* This is a reference to Lord Hartington's letter in the Press of December 21st, 1885, which he alludes to, in writing to Mr. Gladstone, as "published this morning" (*Life of Duke of Devonshire*, vol. ii., p. 103).

in Ireland; then to the conscription in England, and increase of the navy; fresh fortifications on the west coast, and finally a war in which Ireland would have the support of some other Power, perhaps America or France. Between these alternatives there is the hazy idea of Home Rule visible in Morley's speech and Gladstone's assumed intention. It is dangerous and mischievous to use vague language on such a subject. Those who speak ought to say exactly what they mean. It will be found that Home Rule includes an independent separate Irish Parliament, and that all guarantees and securities, whether for the protection of minorities or for the security of the Empire, are absolutely illusory.

'"At the same time we are to continue to receive Irish representatives at Westminster in the Imperial Parliament, and we shall not even get rid of their obstruction and interference here by the concession of their independence in Ireland. To any arrangement of this kind, unworkable as I believe it to be, I prefer separation—to which, indeed, it is only a step.

'"Is there any other possible arrangement which would secure the real integrity of the Empire for Imperial purposes, while allowing Irishmen to play the devil as they like in Ireland?

'"Yes, there is. But it involves the entire recasting of the British Constitution and the full and complete adoption of the American system. According to this view you might have five Parliaments, for England, Scotland, Wales, Ulster,* and the three other provinces combined. Each Parliament to have its own Ministry, responsible to it and dependent on its vote. In addition an Imperial Parliament or Reichsrath with another Ministry dealing with foreign and colonial affairs, army, navy, post-office, and customs.

'"To carry out this arrangement a Supreme Court or similar tribunal must be established, to decide on the respective attributes of the several local legislatures and the limits of their authority.

'"The House of Lords must go, or you must establish a separate Second Chamber for each legislature.

'"It is impossible to suppose that the authority of the Crown could survive these changes for long. One or other of the local legislatures would refuse to pay the expense,

* This is the first suggestion of a scheme under which part of Ireland would be separated from the rest.

and, as it would have some kind of local militia at its back, it is not likely that the other legislatures would engage in civil war for the sake of reimposing the nominal authority of the Sovereign.

'"As a Radical all these changes have no terrors for me, but is it conceivable that such a clean sweep of existing institutions could be made in order to justify the Irish demand for Home Rule? Yet this is the only form of federal government which offers any prospect of permanence or union for Imperial purposes.

'"If English Liberals once see clearly that indefinite talk about Home Rule means either separation or the entire recasting of the whole system of English as well as Irish government, they will then be in a position to decide their policy. At present they are being led by the *Daily News* and Morley and Co. to commit themselves in the dark."

'Next day, December 27th, Chamberlain wrote:

'"The situation (Irish) is now as follows:

'"(1) The Government have been informed that Mr. Gladstone thinks this great question should not be prejudiced by party feeling, and that he will support them in any attempt they may make to give Home Rule to Ireland.

'"(2) Mr. Gladstone has been informed that the Government will see him damned first.

'"(3) The Irishmen have been informed that Mr. Gladstone will not move a step till the Government have spoken or until the Irish have put them in a minority.

'"(4) In either of these events he will do his best to effect a thorough settlement. 'He will go forward or fall.'

'"(5) I gather that he will not, as he ought, challenge Parnell to say publicly exactly what he wants, but that he will propose his own scheme, which is an Irish legislature with a veto reserved to the Crown—to be exercised on most questions on the advice of the Irish Ministry, but on questions of religion, commerce, and taxation, on the advice of the Imperial Ministry.

'"(6) The Irish are suspicious, and have not made up their minds. Parnell says nothing, but the rank and file are inclined to give Mr. Gladstone his chance and turn him out again if they are not satisfied with his proposals.

'"'The Tories hope to get out Mr. Gladstone's intentions in debate on Address, and threaten another immediate dissolution if they are placed in a minority; I think, however, their true policy is and will be to let Mr. Gladstone

come in and make his proposals. This will divide the Liberal party, and in all probability alarm and disgust the country.

'"Was there ever such a situation? Test Mr. Gladstone's scheme in practice. The Irish Ministry insist on necessity of restoring Irish manufactures by protection. The Imperial Parliament veto their proposals. Thereupon the Irish representatives join the Tories and turn out the Government on a foreign and colonial debate, the same Government being in a great majority on all English and Scotch questions. How long can such a state of things last? Mr. Gladstone will have the support of a portion of the Liberal party—Morley, for instance, Storey, the Crofters' representatives, and probably some of the Labour representatives. How many more will he get? Will he have the majority of the Radicals? Will he have the majority of the Liberals, following the party leader like sheep? It is curious to see the *Scotsman* and the *Leeds Mercury* leading in this direction. What are *we* to do? Certainly I will not join a Government pledged to such a mad and dangerous proposal. But this may mean isolation for a long time.

'"The prospect is not an inviting one.

'"I have told Harcourt the facts as in the numbered paragraphs. Do not say a word to anyone else. Harcourt is perplexed and hesitating. I think he is impressed with the danger of Fenian outrages, dynamite, and assassination.

'"For myself, I would sooner the Tories were in for the next ten years than agree to what I think the ruin of the country."

'On New Year's Eve, the 31st, we went to Rugby, where I had to make the speech alluded to in Chamberlain's letter. I had received an invitation, dated December 29th, to a meeting at Devonshire House. Hartington wrote:

'"MY DEAR DILKE,

'"You know, no doubt, that Harcourt has had a good deal of communication with Chamberlain lately. I hear that Chamberlain will be in town on Friday (New Year's Day), and it is proposed that he, Harcourt, you, and I, should meet here on Friday at four to talk over matters, especially Irish. I have asked Granville to come up if he likes. I do not think there would be any advantage in having any others, unless Rosebery?

'"Yours sincerely,

'"HARTINGTON."

'I sent this letter to Chamberlain with an inquiry as to what he knew about the meeting, and he replied on New Year's Eve:

'"The meeting to-morrow was arranged by telegraph. . . . I suspect Mr. Gladstone is inclined to hedge. He refuses to satisfy the Irish by any definite statements. I hope they may continue suspicious and keep the Tories in for some time."'

'Yet it was Chamberlain who was to turn out the Tories. On New Year's Eve, at Rugby, referring to the Irish Question, I praised the speech made by Trevelyan on the previous night as being "a declaration in favour of that scheme of National Councils which he supports for Ireland at least, and which was recommended in an able article in the *Fortnightly Review* for Scotland, Ireland, and Wales." I said: "I am one of those who have never limited my views upon the subject to Ireland. Mr. Trevelyan last night spoke as though it were only in Ireland that it was necessary to institute some local body to deal with purely local questions—with those questions which now come before nominated boards or branches of the Executive Government." I went on to speak in the sense of Mr. Gladstone's letter, in favour of the Conservatives being encouraged to propose such Irish remedial legislation.

'On New Year's Day, 1886, an important meeting took place at Devonshire House between Hartington, Harcourt, Chamberlain, and myself. I did not see my way clearly, and did not say much; the other three arguing strongly against Mr. Gladstone's conduct in having sent Herbert Gladstone to a news agency to let out his views for the benefit of the provincial Press, in such a way as to put pressure on his colleagues. It seemed to me that the pressure, though no doubt unfair and indefensible, had nevertheless been pretty successful, as neither Harcourt nor Chamberlain saw their way to opposing Mr. Gladstone, although both of them disliked his scheme. Hartington only said that he "thought he could not join a Government to promote any such scheme." But, then, he would not, I pointed out, be asked to do so. He would be asked to join a Government to consider something. The practical conclusion come to was to write to Mr. Gladstone to urge him to come to London to consult his colleagues. On January 4th I heard from Hartington that Mr. Gladstone informed him that he had nothing to add to his previous letter dated December 17th. Hartington wrote:

'"I have heard from Mr. Gladstone. He declines to hasten his arrival in London, but will be available on the 11th after 4 p.m. for any who may wish to see him. He will be at my sister-in-law's (Lady F. Cavendish), 21, Carlton House Terrace. . . . He has done nothing and will do nothing to convert his opinions into intentions, for he has not the material before him. There is besides the question of Parliamentary procedure (this refers to action on the Address). For considering this, he thinks the time available in London will be ample."

'In forwarding the correspondence to Chamberlain with a copy of the letter of December 17th, 1885, as I was requested by Hartington to do, I added that Mr. Gladstone could hardly be said not to have done anything which had enabled the Nationalists to establish rival biddings between the two sides (to use his phrase), because we knew that he had asked Arthur Balfour to go to Lord Salisbury with a message from him promising his support if the Government would bring in a Home Rule scheme. This he had let out to the Irish.

'After this we were in consultation as to whether we ought to see Mr. Gladstone separately; and Hartington wrote to me on January 10th, 1886, from Hardwick, that he did not see how we could decline to see Mr. Gladstone separately, but that we might be as reticent as we pleased, and could all combine in urging further collective consultations; and it was arranged that Hartington himself should see Mr. Gladstone on January 12th—the day of the election of the Speaker. Mr. Gladstone then informed us all that he would see such of us as chose on the afternoon of January 11th, and Chamberlain then wrote:

'"As far as I know, only Harcourt is going on Monday, and I on Tuesday morning. If for *any* reason you think it well to go, there is really not the least objection."

'I went on the 11th, but nothing of the least importance passed, and the same was the case with Chamberlain's interview on the 12th. Harcourt was present on the 11th, and evidently in full support of Gladstone.

'On the 15th Labouchere gave a dinner to Chamberlain and Randolph Churchill, but I do not think that anything very serious was discussed. There was a sharp breach at this moment between Chamberlain and Morley, Chamberlain telling Morley that his speeches were "foolish and mischievous," and that he was talking "literary nonsense—the worst of all."

'On January 21st we had a meeting of all the ex-Cabinet at Lord Granville's. Chamberlain breakfasted with me before the meeting, and he drew and I corrected the amendment which was afterwards accepted at the meeting as that which should be supported by the party on the Queen's Speech, and which was that moved by Jesse Collings by which the Government were turned out on the 26th. The adoption of our amendment was very sudden. The leaders had met apparently without any policy, and the moment Chamberlain read our "three acres and a cow" amendment, they at once adopted it without discussion as a way out of all their difficulties and differences.* The Government resigned on the 28th, and on the 29th I had an interview with Chamberlain as to what he should do about taking office.

'On January 30th Mr. Gladstone offered Chamberlain the Admiralty, after Hartington had refused to join the Government. Chamberlain came and saw me, and was to go back to Mr. Gladstone at six. He thought he had no alternative but to accept a place in the Government, although he did not like the Admiralty. Mr. Gladstone showed him a form of words as to Irish Home Rule. It was equivalent to a passage in Sexton's† speech on the 22nd, at which Mr. Gladstone had been seen to nod in a manner which implied that he had suggested the words. The proposal was, as we knew it would be, for inquiry. Chamberlain did not object to the inquiry, but objected to the Home Rule. Chamberlain, before returning to Mr. Gladstone, wrote him a very stiff letter against Home Rule, which somewhat angered him. On Sunday, January 31st, Chamberlain wrote that for personal reasons he had sooner not accept the Admiralty. Mr. Gladstone saw Chamberlain again later in the day, on the Sunday, and asked what it was then that he wanted; to which Chamberlain replied, "The Colonies," and Mr. Gladstone answered, "Oh! A Secretary of State." Chamberlain was naturally angry at this slight, and being offered by Mr. Gladstone the Board of Trade, then refused to return to it. After leaving Mr. Gladstone he went to Harcourt, and told Harcourt that he would take the Local Government Board, "but not very willingly." On Monday, February 1st, I asked Chamberlain to reconsider his decision about the Admiralty, and found that he would have been willing to have done so, but that

* This amendment was carried by seventy-nine votes, and the Government thus overthrown.

† Home Rule M.P. for S. Sligo, 1885-1886; Belfast W., 1886-1892.

it was now too late. On the 2nd Mr. Gladstone wrote me a very nice letter,' quoted above,* 'about the circumstances relating to the trial then coming on which made it impossible for him to include me in the Ministry. Morley wrote:

'"Half my satisfaction and confidence are extinguished by your absence. It may and will make all the difference."'

Mr. Morley's apprehension was justified by events.

In 1880 the position of the Radical leaders, while only private members, had been of such strength that Sir Charles had been able to secure, from a reluctant Prime Minister, the terms agreed on between Mr. Chamberlain and himself. He had obtained for both positions in the Government, and procured Cabinet rank for Chamberlain. Now that the power of one of the allies was demolished, and Mr. Chamberlain stood alone, Mr. Gladstone's view of the changed situation was apparent. The "slight" to Chamberlain was followed by that course of action which resulted in his breach with the Liberal party. Together the two men could, from a far stronger point of vantage than in 1880, have made their terms; with Mr. Chamberlain isolated Mr. Gladstone could impose his own. The alteration in the course of English political history which the next few months were to effect was made finally certain by Sir Charles Dilke's fall.

Lord Rosebery wrote on February 3rd to say that he had been appointed Foreign Secretary, an office which in happier circumstances would, he said to Sir Charles, "have been yours by universal consent." The letter went on to state in very sympathetic words how "constantly present to his mind" was his own inferiority in knowledge and ability to the man who had been set aside.

'I had written to Rosebery at the same moment, and our letters had crossed. I replied to his:

'"My dear Rosebery,

'"Our letters crossed, but mine was a wretched scrawl by the side of yours. I do not know how, with those terrible telegrams beginning to fly round you, you find time to write such letters. I could never have taken the Foreign Office without the heaviest misgiving, and I hope that

* Chapter XLIII., p. 172.

whenever the Liberals are in, up to the close of my life, you may hold it. My 'knowledge' of foreign affairs *is*, I admit to you, great, and I can answer questions in the Commons, and I can negotiate with foreigners. But these are *not* the most important points. As to the excess of 'ability' with which you kindly and modestly credit me, I do not admit it for a moment. I should say that you are far more competent to advise and carry through a policy—far more competent to send the right replies to those telegrams which are the Foreign Office curse. As to questions, these are a mere second curse, but form a serious reason why the Secretary of State should be in the Lords.

'"I have always said that, if kept for no other reason, the Lords should remain as a place for the Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, and *I* think also for the Prime Minister. Between ourselves, you will not have quite a fair chance in being Secretary of State for the Foreign Department under Mr. Gladstone, because Mr. Gladstone *will* trust to his skill in the House of Commons, and *will* speak and reply when the prudent Under-Secretary would ask for long notice or be silent. Lord Granville was always complaining, and Mr. Gladstone always promising never to do it again, and always doing it every day.* I am going to put down a notice to-day to strengthen your hands against France in *re* Diego Suarez."

'From Bryce I heard that he had been appointed Under-Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, and asking me whom he should take as his private secretary; and I told him Austin Lee, and he took him at once.'

'To the Prince of Wales I wrote to say that I should not attend the Levee, and had from him a reply marked by that great personal courtesy which he always shows.'

Thus came into being Mr. Gladstone's third Administration. In 1885 the continuance of Mr. Gladstone's leadership had seemed necessary in order to bridge the gap between Lord Hartington and the Radicals. Now in 1886 Lord Hartington was out, to mark his opposition, not to Chamberlain, but to Gladstone; and Chamberlain was in, though heavily handicapped. Yet none of these contradictions which had defied anticipation was so unforeseen as the exclusion of Sir Charles Dilke.

* See *supra*, p. 51 and note.

APPENDIX

See p. 196. Letter of Mr. Gladstone to Lord Hartington December 17th, 1885:

"The whole stream of public excitement is now turned upon me, and I am pestered with incessant telegrams which I have no defence against but either suicide or Parnell's method of self-concealment. The truth is I have more or less of opinions and ideas, but no intentions or negotiations. In these ideas and opinions there is, I think, little that I have not more or less conveyed in public declarations: in principle, nothing. I will try to lay them before you. I consider that Ireland has now spoken, and that an effort ought to be made by the *Government* without delay to meet her demand for the management, by an Irish legislative body, of Irish as distinct from Imperial affairs. Only a Government can do it, and a Tory Government can do it more easily and safely than any other.

"There is first a postulate—that the state of Ireland shall be such as to warrant it.

"The conditions of an admissible plan, I think, are—

"(1) Union of the Empire and due supremacy of Parliament.

"(2) Protection for the minority. A difficult matter on which I have talked much with Spencer, certain points, however, remaining to be considered.

"(3) Fair allocation of Imperial charges.

"(4) A statutory basis seems to me to be better and safer than the revival of Grattan's Parliament, but I wish to hear more upon this, as the minds of men are still in so crude a state on the whole subject.

"(5) Neither as opinions nor as intentions have I to anyone alive promulgated these ideas as decided on by me.

"(6) As to intentions, I am determined to have none at present —to leave space to the Government—I should wish to encourage them if I properly could—above all, on no account to say or do anything which would enable the Nationalists to establish rival biddings between us.

"If this storm of rumours continues to rage, it may be necessary for me to write some new letter to my constituents, but I am desirous to do nothing, simply leaving the field open for the Government, until time makes it necessary to decide. Of our late colleagues, I have had most communication with Granville, Spencer, and Rosebery. Would you kindly send this on to Granville? I think you will find it in conformity with my public declarations, though some blanks are filled up. I have in truth thought it my duty, without in the least committing myself or anyone else, to think through the subject as well as I could, being equally convinced of its urgency and its bigness."

The remainder of this letter is not quoted in the Memoir.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE FIRST HOME RULE BILL

FEBRUARY TO JULY, 1886

THE acute political crisis now maturing within the Liberal party had a special menace for Sir Charles Dilke. It threatened to affect a personal tie cemented by his friend's stanchness through these months of trouble.

On January 31st, 1886, he wrote:

"MY DEAR CHAMBERLAIN,

"I feel that our friendship is going to be subjected to the heaviest strain it has ever borne, and I wish to minimize any risks to it, in which, however, I don't believe. I am determined that it shall not dwindle into a form or pretence of friendship of which the substance has departed. It will be a great change if I do not feel that I can go to your house or to your room as freely as ever. At the same time confidence from one in the inner circle of the Cabinet to one wholly outside the Government is not easy, and reserve makes all conversation untrue. I think the awkwardness will be less if I abstain from taking part in home affairs (unless, indeed, in supporting my Local Government Bill, should that come up). In Foreign Affairs we shall not be brought into conflict, and to Foreign and Colonial affairs I propose to return.

"I intend to sit behind (in Forster's seat), not below the gangway, as long as you are in the Government.

'There is one great favour which I think you will be able to do me without any trouble to yourself, and that is to let my wife come to your room to see me *between* her lunch and the meeting of the House. The greatest nuisance about being out is that I shall have to go down in the mornings to get my place, and to sit in the library all day. . . .

"Yours ever,

"CHS. W. D."

When the first trial of the divorce case was over (almost before Mr. Gladstone's Government had fairly assumed office), in the period during which Sir Charles designedly absented himself from the House of Commons,

'Chamberlain asked me to act on the Committee to revise my Local Government Bill, and to put it into a form for introduction to the House; and I attended at the Local Government Board throughout the spring at meetings at which Chamberlain, if present, presided. . . . It is a curious fact that I often presided over this Cabinet Committee, though not a member of the Government.'

During the month of February, while the Press campaign against him was ripening, Sir Charles had little freedom of mind for politics. Yet this was the moment when Mr. Chamberlain's action, decisive for the immediate fate of a great question, had to be determined. Sir Charles had been a conducting medium between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Chamberlain. He was so no longer. "I wonder," wrote Chamberlain, years after, on reading Dilke's Memoir, "what passed in that most intricate and Jesuitical mind in the months between June and December, 1885." Perhaps the breach that came was unavoidable. But at all events the one man who might have prevented it was at the critical moment hopelessly involved in the endeavour to combat the scandal that assailed him.*

* There is a letter of this date to Mr. John Morley:

"76, SLOANE STREET, S.W.,
"*February 2nd.*

"MY DEAR MORLEY,

"As I must not yet congratulate you on becoming at a bound Privy Councillor and member of the Cabinet, let me in the meantime congratulate you on your election as a V.P. of the Chelsea Liberal Association. But seriously, there can be no doubt that you now have sealed the great position which you had already won. My *one* hope is that you will work—my hope, not for your own sake, but for the sake of Radical principles—as completely with Chamberlain as I did. It is the only way to stand against the overwhelming numbers of the Whig peers. I fear Mr. Gladstone will find his new lot of Whig peers just as troublesome as the old.

"As long as I am out and *my friends* are in, I shall sit, not in my old place below the gangway, but behind, and do anything and everything that I can do to help.

"Yours ever,
"CHS. W. D.

"I *hope* it is true that Stansfeld is back ?"

It was not till March 3rd, 1886, that

'I resumed my attendance at the House of Commons, and Joseph Cowen, the member for Newcastle, did what he could to make it pleasant. I wrote to him, and he replied: "It is a man's duty to stick to his friends when they are 'run at' as you have been."'

'On March 4th a meeting of the Local Government Committee at Chamberlain's was put off by the absence of Thring, who had been sent for by Mr. Gladstone with instructions to draw a Home Rule Bill. I went to Chamberlain's house, he being too cross to come to the House of Commons, and held with him an important conversation as to his future. I tried to point out to him that if he went out, as he was thinking of doing, he would wreck the party, who would put up with the Whigs going out against Mr. Gladstone on Home Rule, but who would be rent in twain by a Radical secession. He would do this, I told him, without much popular sympathy, and it was a terrible position to face. He told me that he had said so much in the autumn that he felt he *must* do it. I said, "Certainly. But do not go out and fight. Go out and lie low. If honesty forces you out, well and good, but it does not force you to fight." He seemed to agree, at all events at the moment.

'On March 13th there was a Cabinet, an account of which I had from Chamberlain, who was consulting me daily as to his position. Mr. Gladstone expounded his land proposals, which ran to 120 millions of loan, and on which Chamberlain wrote: "As a result of yesterday's Council, I think Trevelyan and I will be out on Tuesday. If you are at the House, come to my room after questions." I went to Chamberlain's room and met Bright with him. But real consultation in presence of Bright was impossible, because Bright was merely disagreeable. On Monday, the 15th, Chamberlain and Trevelyan wrote their letters of resignation, and late at night Chamberlain showed me the reply to his. On the same day James told me that the old and close friendship between Harcourt and himself was at an end, they having taken opposite sides with some warmth. On the 16th Chamberlain wrote to Mr. Gladstone that he thought he had better leave him, as he could only attend his Cabinets in order to gather arguments against his schemes; and Mr. Gladstone replied that he had better come all the same.

'On the 22nd I had an interesting talk with Sexton about the events of the period between April and June, 1885. Sexton said that he had agreed to the Chamberlain plan in conversation with Manning, but it was as a Local Government plan, not to prevent, so far as he was concerned, the subsequent adoption of a Parliament. It was on this day that Chamberlain's resignation became final. On March 26th I, having to attend a meeting on the Irish question under the auspices of the Chelsea Liberal Association, showed Chamberlain a draft of the resolution which I proposed for it. I had written: "That while this meeting is firmly resolved on the maintenance of the Union between Great Britain and Ireland, it is of opinion that the wishes of the Irish people in favour of self-government, as expressed at the last election, should receive satisfaction." Chamberlain wrote back that the two things were inconsistent, and that the Irish wishes as expressed by Parnell were for separation. But his only suggestion was that I should insert "favourable consideration" in place of "satisfaction," which did not seem much change. This, however, was the form in which the resolution was carried by an open Liberal public meeting, and it is an interesting example of the fluidity of opinion in the Liberal party generally at the moment. A rider to the effect that the meeting had complete confidence in Mr. Gladstone was moved, but from want of adequate support was not put to the meeting. I violently attacked the land purchase scheme in my speech, suspended my judgment upon the Home Rule scheme until I saw it, but declared that it was "one which, generally speaking, so far as I know it, I fancy I should be able to support." On this same day Cyril Flower told me that on the previous day the Irish members had informed Mr. Gladstone that it was their wish that he should entirely abandon that land purchase scheme which he had adopted for the sake of conciliating Lord Spencer. On March 27th Chamberlain wrote: "My resignation has been accepted by the Queen, and is now therefore public property. We have a devil of a time before us."

'On April 5th there was a misunderstanding between Hartington and Chamberlain which almost shivered to pieces the newborn Liberal Unionist party. Hartington had taken to having meetings of James and some of the other more Whiggish men who were acting with him, which meetings Chamberlain would not attend, and at these meetings resolutions were arrived at to which Chamber-

lain paid no attention. Chamberlain consulted me as to the personal question between Hartington and himself, and placed in my hands the letters which passed.'

Mr. Gladstone was to introduce his Home Rule Bill on April 8th, and on the 5th Lord Hartington wrote to Chamberlain announcing that he had "very unwillingly" decided to follow Mr. Gladstone immediately, "not, of course, for the purpose of answering his speech, but to state in general terms why that part of the party which generally approves of my course in declining to join the Government is unable to accept the measure which Mr. Gladstone will describe to us."

Chamberlain replied on April 6th to Lord Hartington that his letter had surprised him. Having tendered his resignation on March 15th, he had kept silence as to his motives and intentions. He said he thought that it was understood that retiring Ministers were expected to take the first opportunity of explaining their resignations, and Trevelyan and he were alone in a position to say how far Mr. Gladstone might have modified his proposals since their resignations, and thus to initiate the subsequent debate. He objected to what he understood to be Lord Hartington's proposed course—namely, formally to oppose Mr. Gladstone's scheme immediately on its announcement; and this he thought not only a tactical error, but also discourteous to Trevelyan and himself.

'Chamberlain went on, however, virtually to accept Hartington's suggestion, and the real reason was that he had not received the Queen's permission to speak upon the land purchase scheme, and that he did not want to make his real statement until he was in a position to do this. Chamberlain, in sending me this correspondence, said that Hartington's proposal was "dictated by Goschen's uneasy jealousy."'

Sir Charles at this moment believed it possible that Mr. Chamberlain might carry his point against Mr. Gladstone as to the continued representation of Ireland at West-

minster, and, although he disliked this proposal, desired its success because it would retain Mr. Chamberlain in the party. This is the moment at which Dilke's influence, had he retained his old position, would probably have proved decisive. What Mr. Gladstone would not yield to Chamberlain alone he would probably have yielded to the two Radicals combined; and Mr. Chamberlain, deprived of the argument to which he gave special prominence, could scarcely have resisted his friend's wish that he should support the second reading. Sir Charles wrote, April 7th, 1886:

"I don't like the idea of the Irish throwing all their ferocity against you, and treating you as they treated Forster. Unless you are given a very large share in the direction of the business, I think you must let it be known that you are not satisfied with the Whig line. I hate the prospect of your being driven into coercion as a follower of a Goschen-Hartington-James-Brand-Albert Grey clique, and yet treated by the Irish as the Forster of the clique. I believe from what I see of my caucus, and from the two large *public* meetings we have held for discussion, that the great mass of the party will go for Repeal, though fiercely against the land. Enough will go the other way to risk all the seats, but the party will go for Repeal, and sooner or later now Repeal will come, whether or not we have a dreary period of coercion first. I should decidedly let it be known that you won't stand airs from Goschen.

"Yours ever,
"CHS. W. D."

'Another meeting on the Irish Question in Chelsea led to no clearer expression of opinion than had the previous one, for it was concluded by Mr. Westlake, Q.C., M.P., who afterwards voted against the Home Rule Bill, moving that the meeting suspend its judgment, and Mr. Firth, who was a Gladstonian candidate and afterwards a Home Rule member, seconding this resolution, which was carried unanimously.'

'On April 20th Labouchere wrote to me as to an attempt which he was making to heal the breach between Mr. Gladstone and Chamberlain.

'Chamberlain wrote on April 22nd from Highbury: "I got through my meeting last night splendidly. Schnad-

horst has been doing everything to thwart me, but the whole conspiracy broke down completely in face of the meeting, which was most cordially enthusiastic. The feeling against the Land Bill was overwhelming. As regards Home Rule, there is no love for the Bill, but only a willingness to accept the principle as a necessity, and to hope for a recasting of the provisions. There is great sympathy with the old man personally, and at the same time a soreness that he did not consult his colleagues and party. Hartington's name was hissed. They cannot forgive him for going to the Opera House with Salisbury. I continue to receive many letters of sympathy from Radicals and Liberals, and invitations to address meetings, but I shall lie low now for some time. The Caucuses in the country are generally with the Government, but there will be a great number of abstentions at an election. . . . Parnell is apparently telling a good many lies just now. He told W. Kenrick the other day, not knowing his relationship at first, that I had made overtures to him for Home Rule, which showed my opposition to Mr. G. to be purely personal. I have sent him word that he has my leave to publish anything ever written or said by me on the Irish Question, either to him or to anyone else. . . . I have a list of 109 men who at one time or another have promised to vote against the second reading, but they are not all stanch, and I do not think any calculation is to be relied on."

'On April 24th Labouchere wrote that Chamberlain and Morley could not be got together, Chamberlain sticking to his phrases, and Morley writing that Chamberlain's speech is an attempt to coerce the Government, and they won't stand coercion.

'On April 30th Chamberlain wrote to me from Birmingham to get me to vote with him against the second reading. "The Bill is doomed. I have a list of 111 Liberals pledged against the second reading. Of these I know that fifty-nine have publicly announced their intentions to their constituents. I believe that almost all the rest are certain; but making every allowance for desertions, the Home Rule Bill cannot pass without the changes I have asked for. If these were made, I reckon that at least fifty of the malcontents would vote for the second reading. Besides my 111 there are many more who intend to vote for amendments in Committee. The Land Bill has hardly any friends;" and then he strongly pressed me to go down to Highbury upon the subject.'

To this Sir Charles replied:

"PYRFORD,
"*May Day*, 1886.

"MY DEAR CHAMBERLAIN,

"Lots of people have written to me, confident statements having been made that I was against the Bills, which I see Heneage repeats in the *Times* to-day. I have replied that I was strongly against the Bill for land purchase, but that as regards the chief Bill I had said nothing, and was free to vote as I thought right when the time came. I have called my caucus for Friday. We don't have reporters, but I think I ought to tell them what I mean to do, and why.

"As to our being separated, I am most anxious, as you know, that you should not vote against the second reading. I know the Bill is doomed, but I fancy the Government know that, too, and that some change will be made or promised, and it is a question of how much. My difficulty in being one to *ask* for those changes you want is that I am against the chief change, as you know. If it is made—as seems likely—I shall keep quiet and not say I am against it, but go with you and the rest. But—what if it is not made? You see, I have said over and over again that, if forced to have a big scheme, I had sooner get rid of the Irish members, and that, if forced to choose between Repeal and Federation, I prefer Repeal to any scheme of Federation I have ever heard of. Now, all this I can swallow quietly—yielding my own judgment—if I go with the party; but I can't well fight against the party for a policy which is opposed to my view of the national interest. If it is of any use that I should remain free up to the last instant, I can manage this. I can explain my views in detail to the caucus, and not say which way I intend to vote; but I do not well see how, when it comes to the vote, I can fail to vote for the second reading.

"The reason, as you know, why I am so anxious for YOU (which matters more than I matter at present or shall for a long time) to find yourself able if possible to take the offers made you, and vote for the second reading, is that the dissolution will wreck the party, but yet leave *a* party—democratic, because all the moderates will go over to the Tories; poor, because all the subscribers will go over to the Tories; more Radical than the party has ever been; and yet, as things now stand, with you outside of it."

Chamberlain wrote on May 3rd from Highbury:

"My dear Dilke,

"Your letter has greatly troubled me. My pleasure in politics has gone, and I hold very loosely to public life just now.

"The friends with whom I have worked so long are many of them separated from me. The party is going blindly to its ruin, and everywhere there seems a want of courage and decision and principle which almost causes one to despair. I have hesitated to write to you again, but perhaps it is better that I should say what is in my mind. During all our years of intimacy I have never had a suspicion, until the last few weeks, that we differed on the Irish Question. You voted for Butt, and I assumed that, like myself, you were in favour of the principle of federation, although probably, like myself also, you did not think the time had come to give practical effect to it. The retention of the Irish representatives is clearly the touchstone. If they go, separation must follow. If they remain, federation is possible whenever local assemblies are established in England and Scotland. Without the positive and absolute promise of the Government that the Irish representation will be maintained, I shall vote against the second reading. You must do what your conscience tells you to be right, and, having decided, I should declare the situation publicly at once.

"It will do you harm on the whole, but that cannot be helped, if you have made up your mind that it is right. But you must be prepared for unkind things said by those who know how closely we have been united hitherto. The present crisis is, of course, life and death to me. I shall win if I can, and if I cannot I will cultivate my garden. I do not care for the leadership of a party which should prove itself so fickle and so careless of national interests as to sacrifice the unity of the Empire to the precipitate impatience of an old man—careless of the future in which he can have no part—and to an uninstructed instinct which will not take the trouble to exercise judgment and criticism.

"I hope you have got well through your meeting to-night. I send this by early post to-morrow before I can see the papers.

"Yours very truly,

"J. Chamberlain."

'The meeting to which Chamberlain in his letter referred was that at Preece's Riding School, in which I announced that I had succeeded in inducing the Queen's Proctor to intervene. . . . The meeting was a very fine one, and the next day Chamberlain wrote to congratulate me on it and on my speech, and added: "Labouchere writes me that the Government are at last alive to the fact that they cannot carry the second reading without me, and that Mr. G. is going to give way. I hope it is true, but I shall not believe it till he has made a public declaration."'

Sir Charles replied:

"76, SLOANE STREET, S.W.,
"*Wednesday, May 5th*, 1886.

"MY DEAR CHAMBERLAIN,

". . . It is a curious fact that we should without a difference have gone through the trials of the years in which we were rivals, and that the differences and the break should have come now that I have—at least in my own belief, and that of most people—ceased for ever to count at all in politics. . . . The fall was, as you know, in my opinion final and irretrievable on the day on which the charge was made in July last—as would be that, in these days, of any man against whom such a false charge was made by conspiracy and careful preparation. I think, as I have always thought, that the day will come when all will know, but it will come too late for political life to be resumed with power or real use. . . .

"You say you never had a suspicion that we differed on the Irish Question. As to land purchase—yes: we used to differ about it; and we do not differ about the present Bill. As to the larger question—when Morley and I talked it over with you in the autumn, I said that, if I had to take a large scheme, I inclined rather to Repeal, or getting rid of the Irish members, than to Home Rule. I don't think, however, that I or you had either of us very clear or definite views, and I am sure that Morley hadn't. You inclined to stick to National Councils only, and I never heard you speak of Federation until just before you spoke on the Bill in Parliament. I spoke in public against Federation in the autumn in reply to Rosebery.

"I do not pretend to have clear and definite views now, any more than I had then. I am so anxious, for you personally, and for the Radical cause, that anything shall be done by the Government that will allow you to vote for the second reading, and so succeed to the head of the

party purged of the Whig element; so anxious, that, while I don't really see my way about Federation, and on the whole am opposed to it, I will pretend to see my way, and try and find hope about it; so anxious, that, though I still incline to think (in great doubt) that it would be better to get rid of the Irish members, I said in my last, I think, I would be silent as to this, and joyfully see the Government wholly alter their scheme in your sense. I still hope for the Government giving the promise that you ask. Labouchere has kept me informed of all that has passed, and I have strongly urged your view on Henry Fowler, who agrees with you, and on the few who have spoken to me. I care (in great doubt as to the future of Ireland and as to that of the Empire) more about the future of Radicalism, and about your return to the party and escape from the Whigs, than about anything else as to which I am clear and free from doubt. I don't think that my circumstances make any declaration or any act of mine necessary, and on Friday at the private meeting I need not declare myself, and can perhaps best help bring about the promise which you want by not doing so. Why don't you deal with the Chancellor (Lord Herschell), instead of with Labouchere, O'Shea, and so forth ?

"I care so much (not about what you name, and it is a pity you should do so, for one word of yourself is worth more with me than the opinion of the whole world)—not about what people will say, but about what you think, that I am driven distracted by your tone. I beg you to think that I do not consider myself in this at all, except that I should wish to so act as to act rightly. Personal policy I should not consider for myself. My seat here will go, either way, for certain, as it is a Tory seat now, and will become a more and more Tory seat with each fresh registration. If I should make any attempt to remain at all in political life, I do not think that my finding another seat would depend on the course I take in this present Irish matter. This thing will be forgotten in the common resistance of the Radicals to Tory coercion. I think, then, that by the nature of things I am not influenced by selfish considerations. As to inclination, I feel as strongly as any man can as to the *way* in which Mr. Gladstone has done this thing, and all my inclination is therefore to follow you, where affection also leads. But if this is to be—what it will be—a fight, not as to the way and the man, and the past, but as to the future, the second reading will be a choice

between acceptance of a vast change which has in one form or the other become inevitable, and on the other side Hartington-Goschen opposition, with coercion behind it. I am only a camp follower now, but my place is not in the camp of the Goschens, Hartingtons, Brands, Heneages, Greys. I owe something, too, to my constituents. There can be no doubt as to the feeling of the rank and file, from whom I have received such hearty support and following. If I voted against the second reading, unable as I should be honestly to defend my vote as you could and would honestly defend yours, by saying that all turned on the promise as to the retention of the Irish members, I should be voting without a ground or a defence, except that of personal affection for you, which is one which it is wholly impossible to put forward. If I voted against the second reading, I should vote like a peer, with total disregard to the opinion of those who sent me to Parliament. Their overwhelming feeling—and they never cared for Mr. Gladstone, and do not care for him—is, hatred of the Land Bill, but determination to have done with coercion. They look on the second reading as a declaration for or against large change. They believe that the Irish members will be kept, though they differ as to whether they want it. Both you and I regard large change as inevitable, and it is certain that as to the form of it you must win. The exclusion of the Irish has no powerful friends, save Morley, and he knows he is beaten and must give way. I still in my heart think the case for the exclusion better than the case against it, but all the talk is the other way. The *Pall Mall* is helping you very powerfully, for it *is* a tremendous power, and even Mr. G., I fancy, is really with you about it, and not with Morley. It seems to me that they must accept your own terms.

"The meeting was a most wonderful success.

"Yours ever,

"CHS. W. D.

"Since I nearly finished this, your other has come, and I have now read it. I have only to repeat that I should not negotiate through Labouchere, but through a member of the Cabinet of high character who agrees in your view. L. is very able and very pleasant, but still a little too fond of fun, which often, in delicate matters, means mischief.

"I have kept no copy of this letter. When one has a "difference with a friend," I believe "prudence dictates" that one should keep a record of what one writes. I have

not done so. I can't really believe that you would, however worried and badgered and misrepresented, grow hard or unkind under torture, any more than I have; but you are stronger than I am, and perhaps my weakness helps me in this way. I don't believe in the difference, and I have merely scribbled all I think in the old way."

Chamberlain wrote:

"*May 6th*, 1886.

"My dear Dilke,

"The strain of the political situation is very great, and the best and strongest of us may well find it difficult to keep an even mind.

"I thank you for writing so fully and freely. It is evident that, without meaning it, I must have said more than I supposed, and perhaps in the worry of my own mind I did not allow enough for the tension of yours.

"We never have been rivals. Such an idea has not at any time entered my mind, and consequently, whether your position is as desperate as you suppose or as completely retrievable as I hope and believe, it is not from this point of view that I regard any differences, but entirely as questions affecting our long friendship and absolute mutual confidence. If we differ now at this supreme moment, it is just as painful to me to lose your entire sympathy as if you could bring to me an influence as great as Gladstone's himself.

"I feel bitterly the action of some of these men . . . who have left my side at this time, although many of them owe much to me, and certainly cannot pretend to have worked out for themselves the policy which for various reasons they have adopted. On the whole—and in spite of unfavourable symptoms—I think I shall win this fight, and shall have in the long-run an increase of public influence; but even if this should be the case I cannot forget what has been said and done by those who were among my most intimate associates, and I shall never work with them again with the slightest real pleasure or real confidence. With you it is different. We have been so closely connected that I cannot contemplate any severance. I hope, as I have said, that this infernal cloud on your public life will be dispersed; and if it is not I feel that half my usefulness and more—much more—than half my interest in politics are gone. . . . As to the course to be taken, it is clear. You must do what you believe to be right, even though it sends us for once into opposite lobbies.

"I do not really expect the Government to give way, and, indeed, I do not wish it. To satisfy others I have talked about conciliation, and have consented to make advances, but on the whole I would rather vote against the Bill than not, and the retention of the Irish members is only, with me, the flag that covers other objections. I want to see the whole Bill recast and brought back to the National Council proposals, with the changes justified by the altered public opinion. I have no objection to call them Parliaments and to give them some legislative powers, but I have as strong a dislike as ever to anything like a really co-ordinate authority in Ireland, and if one is ever set up I should not like to take the responsibility of governing England.

"I heartily wish I could clear out of the whole business for the next twelve months at least. I feel that there is no longer any security for anything while Mr. Gladstone remains the foremost figure in politics. But as between us two let nothing come.

"Yours ever sincerely,
"J. CHAMBERLAIN."

'On May 7th Chamberlain wrote:

'"I hope it will all come right in the end, and though not so optimist as I was, I do believe that 'le jour se fera.'

'"I got more names yesterday against the Bill. I have ninety-three now. Labouchere declares still that Mr. G. means to give way, and has now a plan for the retention of Irish members which is to go to Cabinet to-day or to-morrow."

'On May 18th I presided at the special meeting of the London Liberal and Radical Council, of which I was President, which discussed the Home Rule Bill; but I merely presided without expressing opinions, and I discouraged the denunciations of Hartington and Chamberlain, which, however, began to be heard, their names being loudly hissed. On May 27th we had the meeting of the party on the Bill at the Foreign Office, which I attended. But there was no expression of the views of the minority.'

Mr. Chamberlain wrote to the Press some phrases of biting comment concerning the meeting of the 18th, and Sir Charles made protest in a private letter.

'It is a great pity,' he wrote to Chamberlain, 'that you should not have done justice to the efforts and speeches of

your friends at that meeting. Many were there (and the seven delegates from almost every association attended, which made the meeting by far the most complete representation of the party ever held) simply for the purpose of preventing and replying to attacks on you. For every attack on you there was a reply; the amendments attacking you were both defeated, and a colourless resolution carried, and Claydon, Osborn, Hardcastle and others, defended you with the utmost warmth and vigour.'

'Chamberlain wrote to me (May 20th, 1886) about the attacks which were being made on him:

'"I was disgusted at the brutality of some of the attacks. I am only human, and I cannot stand the persistent malignity of interpretation of all my actions and motives without lashing out occasionally. You will see that I met your letter with an apology. I might complain of its tone, but I don't. This strain and tension is bad for all of us. I do not know where it will ultimately lead us, but I fear that the mischief already done is irretrievable.

'"I shall fight this matter out to the bitter end, but I am getting more and more doubtful whether, when it is out of the way, I shall continue in politics. I am 'wounded in the house of my friends,' and I have lost my interest in the business."

'In another letter (May 21st) Chamberlain said: "Your note makes everything right between us. Let us agree to consider everything which is said and done for the next few weeks as a dream.

'"I suppose the party must go to smash and the Tories come in. After a few years those of us who remain will be able to pick up the pieces. It is a hard saying, but apparently Mr. Gladstone is bent on crowning his life by the destruction of the most devoted and loyal instrument by which a great Minister was ever served."*

'On June 2nd Chamberlain wrote: "I suppose we shall have a dissolution immediately and an awful smash." On that day I spoke on the Irish Registration Bills in the House of Commons—almost the only utterance which I made in the course of this short Parliament.

'On June 4th Sir Robert Sandeman, who had sought an interview with me to thank me for what I had done pre-

* In a letter of January 2nd, 1886, Lord Hartington, writing to Lord Granville, said: "Did any leader ever treat a party in such a way as he (Mr. Gladstone) has done?" (*Life of Granville*, vol. ii., p. 478).

viously about the assigned districts on the Quetta frontier, came to see me, to tell me the present position and to discuss with me Sir Frederick Roberts's plans for defence against the eventuality of a Russian advance.'

The defeat of the Home Rule Bill by a majority of thirty came on June 8th, and the General Election followed.* Sir Charles voted for the Bill.

'On July 5th I was beaten at Chelsea, and so left Parliament in which I had sat from November, 1868.

'The turn-over in Chelsea was very small, smaller than anywhere else in the neighbourhood, and showed that personal considerations had told in my favour, inasmuch as we gained but a small number of Irish, it not being an Irish district, and had it not been for personal considerations should have lost more Liberal Unionists than we did.

'Some of my warmest private and personal friends were forced to work and vote against me (on the Irish Question), as, for example, John Westlake, Q.C., and Dr. Robert Cust, the learned Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society, and Sir Henry Gordon—General Charles Gordon's brother—who soon afterwards died, remaining my strong friend, as did these others.

'James wrote to Lady Dilke, July 26th:

'"No one but your husband could have polled so many Gladstonian votes. London is dead against the Prime Minister."'

Mr. Chamberlain wrote of his deep regret and sympathy that the one Ministerialist seat which he had earnestly hoped

* See Morley's *Life of Gladstone*, vol. iii., p. 337, which gives one o'clock on the morning of the 8th as the time of decision.

Sir Charles's Memoir contains among its pages an article from *Truth* of October 14th, 1908, marked by him. The article, which is called "The Secret History of the First Home Rule Bill," states that Mr. Gladstone's language did not make clear that the proposal to exclude Irish representatives from the Imperial Parliament was given up. Mr. Chamberlain, who had made the retention of the Irish members a condition of giving his vote for the second reading, left the House, declaring that his decision to vote against the Bill was final.

The *Life of Labouchere*, by Algar Thorold, chap. xii., p. 272 *et seq.*, gives the long correspondence between Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Labouchere prior to this event.

would be kept should have gone. He pointed out that the falling off in this case was less than in other London polls; but the reactionary period would continue while Mr. Gladstone was in politics. If he retired, Mr. Chamberlain thought the party would recover in a year or two.

There is a warm letter from Mr. Joseph Cowen of Newcastle, who wrote:

"Chelsea has been going Tory for some time past, and only you would have kept it Liberal at the last election. . . . If you had not been one of the bravest men that ever lived, you would have been driven away long ago. I admire your courage and sincerely sympathize with your misfortunes. . . . I always believed you would achieve the highest position in English statesmanship, and I don't despair of your doing so still."

For a final word in this chapter of discouragement may be given a letter from Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, who wrote from a detached position, having been prevented by illness from standing both in 1885 and 1886:

"What a delightful leader of a party is the G.O.M.! It is an interesting subject of speculation, though, thank God, it is one of speculation only, what might happen to this country if, like the old Red Indian in Hawthorne's novel, he lived to be 300 years old. . . . My own opinions about setting up a Parliament in Dublin are quite unchanged, but I look on the G.O.M. as the great obstacle to any satisfactory settlement. I see nothing but pandemonium ahead of us."*

Sir Charles, as a Gladstonian Liberal politician, was involved in the misfortune of his party. But in the first weeks of July he hoped that justice in the court of law might soon relieve his personal misfortunes. That anticipation was rudely falsified. Within a fortnight after he had lost the seat which had been won and held by him triumphantly in four General Elections, the second trial of his case was over, and had followed the course which has been already described.

* The question was whether the future Assembly in Dublin was to be called a "Legislature" or a "Parliament."

CHAPTER XLVII

LADY DILKE—76, SLOANE STREET

Sir Charles Dilke's marriage in 1885 extended rather than modified his sphere of work. Lady Dilke, the Emilia Strong who was studying drawing in 1859 at South Kensington,* had submitted herself in these long intervening years to such scholarly training and discipline as gave her weight and authority on the subjects which she handled.

The brilliant girl's desire to take all knowledge for her kingdom had been intensified by her marriage at twenty-one to the scholar more than twice her age. In the words of Sir Charles's Memoir: "She widened her conception of art by the teaching of the philosopher and by the study of the literatures to which the schooling of Mark Pattison admitted her. She saw, too, men and things, travelled largely with him, became mistress of many tongues, and gained above all a breadth of desire for human knowledge, destined only to grow with the advance of years."†

At twenty-five years of age she was contributing philosophical articles to the *Westminster Review*, and for years she wrote the review of foreign politics for the *Annual Register*. Later she furnished art criticisms to the *Portfolio*, the *Saturday Review*, and the *Academy*, of which last she was art editor. It was as an art critic that she had come to be known, and to this work she brought a remarkable equipment; for to her technical knowledge and artist's

* See Chapter II. (Vol. I., p. 17).

† *The Book of the Spiritual Life*, by the late Lady Dilke, with a Memoir of the Author by Sir Charles W. Dilke, p. 18.

training was added a deep study of the tendencies of history and of human thought. *Art in the Modern State*, in which she wrote of the art of the "Grand Siècle" in its bearing on modern political and social organizations, has been quoted as the book most characteristic of the philosophical tendency of her writing, but this did not appear till 1888. The *Renaissance of Art in France*, which had been published in 1879, was illustrated by drawings from her own pencil, and in 1884 had appeared *Claude Lorrain*, written by herself in the pure and graceful French of which she was mistress.

She had been a pupil of Mulready, whose portrait still decorates the mantelpiece of her Pyrford home, and in the early South Kensington days had come much under the influence of Watts and Ruskin. There were numbered among her friends many who had achieved distinction in the art, literature, or politics of Europe. Her letters on art to Eugène Müntz, preserved in the Manuscript Department of the Bibliothèque Nationale, commemorate the friendship and assistance given to her by the author of the *History of the Italian Renaissance*, whose admiration for her work made him persuade her to undertake her *Claude*. It was Taine who bore witness to her "veritable erudition on the fine arts of the Renaissance," when in 1871, lecturing in Oxford, he used to visit Mark Pattison and his young wife at Lincoln College, and described the "toute jeune femme, charmante, gracieuse, à visage frais et presque mutin, dans le plus joli nid de vieille architecture, avec lierre et grands arbres."* It was Renan, a friend of later years, whom as yet she did not know, who "presented" her *Renaissance* to the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.

But there was another side to her activities, as intense. Public service was to her a duty of citizenship, and her keen sympathy with suffering had inspired her to such study of economic and industrial questions that, in her effort for the development of organization among women workers, she was for years "the practical director of a considerable social

* "The Art Work of Lady Dilke," *Quarterly Review*, October, 1906.

movement." Her four volumes on Art in France in the Eighteenth Century, which occupied her from this time onwards, were not more absorbing to her than was the growth of the Women's Trade Union League.

She had concentrated her powers on a special period of French art, just as she concentrated them on a certain phase of industrial development; but her reverence for and pursuit of all learning persisted, and, in the words of the Memoir written by Sir Charles, " she was master enough of human knowledge in its principal branches to know the relation of almost every part of it to every other."*

The intense mental training of the years of her first marriage had given her a grasp of essential facts and a breadth of outlook most unusual in women, and rare among men. She always correlated her own special work to that of the larger world. She found in the Women's Protective and Provident Union a little close corporation, full of sex antagonism and opposition to legislative protection, but under her sway these limitations gradually disappeared, and the Women's Trade Union movement became an integral part of industrial progress. It is difficult to realize now the breadth of vision which was then required to see that the industrial interests of the sexes are identical and that protective legislation does not hamper, but emancipates. It was this attitude which brought to her in this field of work the friendship and support of all that was best in the Labour world of her day henceforth to the end.

" It is delightful to talk to Mrs. Mark Pattison," said Sir Charles Dilke years before to Sir Henry James. " She says such wonderful things." She had the rare power of revealing to others by a few words things in their true values, and those who came within the sphere of her influence try still to recover the attitude of mind which she inspired, to remember how she would have looked at the fresh problems which confront them, and to view them in relation to all work and life.

* *Book of the Spiritual Life*, Memoir, p. 70.

It was this knowledge and breadth of view which told. A perfect speaker, with tremendous force of personality, charm of manner, beauty of voice, and command of emotional oratory, her power was greatest when she preferred to these methods the force of a reasoned appeal. Conviction waited on these appeals, and in early days, at a public meeting, a group of youthful cynics, "out" for entertainment, dispersed with the comment: "That was wonderful—you couldn't heckle a woman like that."

Her serious work never detracted from her social charm, which was influenced by her love and study of eighteenth-century French art. Her wit, gaiety, and the sensitive fancy which manifested itself in her stories,* made up this charm, which was reflected in the distinction and finish of her appearance. Some touches seemed subtly to differentiate her dress from the prevailing fashion, and to make it the expression of a personality which belonged to a century more dignified, more leisured, and less superficial, than our own.† Her dress recalled the canvases of Boucher, Van Loo, and Watteau, which she loved.

She played as she worked, with all her heart, delivering herself completely to the enjoyment of the moment. "Vous devez bien vous amuser, Monsieur, tous les jours chez vous," said a Frenchwoman to Sir Charles one night at a dinner in Paris.‡ In this power of complete relaxation their natures coincided. Her gaiety matched Sir Charles's own. This perhaps was the least of the bonds between them. The same high courage, the same capacity for tireless work, the same sense of public duty, characterized both.

Sir Charles's real home was the home of all his life, of his father and grandfather—No. 76, Sloane Street. Pyrford and Dockett were, like La Sainte Campagne at Toulon, mainly places for rest and play. This home was a house of treasures—of many things precious in themselves, and more that were precious to the owners from memory and association.

* *The Shrine of Love, and Other Stories*; and *The Shrine of Death, and Other Stories.*

† *Book of the Spiritual Life*, p. 120.

‡ *Book of the Spiritual Life*, Memoir, p. 96.

Through successive generations one member of the family after another had added to the collection. Many had been accumulated by the last owner, who slept always in the room that had been his nursery. He believed he would die, and desired to die, in the house where he was born. The desire was accomplished, for he died there, on January 26th, 1911, a few months before the long lease expired.

Partly from its dull rich colouring of deep blues and reds and greens, its old carpets and tapestries, partly from the pictures that crowded its walls, the interior had the air rather of a family country-house than of a London dwelling in a busy street.

Pictures, lining the walls from top to bottom of the staircase, represented a medley of date and association. Byng's Fleet at Naples on August 1st, 1718, with Sir Thomas Dilkes second in command, hung next to a view of the Château de la Garde, near Toulon. This picturesque ruin rose clear in the view from Sir Charles's house at Cap Brun, "La Sainte Campagne," and figures as an illustration in one of Lady Dilke's stories; "Reeds and Umbrella Pines" at Carqueiranne, by Pownoll Williams, kept another memory of Provence. Next to a painting, by Horace Vernet, of a scene on the Mediterranean coast, little Anne Fisher, born 1588, exhibited herself in hooped and embroidered petticoat, quaint cap and costly laces, a person of great dignity at six years old. She was to be Lady Dilke of Maxstoke Castle and a shrewd termagant, mother of two sons who sided, one with the Commonwealth, the other with the King. The Royalist Sir Peter Wentworth was a great friend of Milton, with whom he came in contact on the Committee of State when Milton was Secretary for the Council of Foreign Tongues. But Cromwell turned him off the Council, and he was arrested and brought to London for abetting his Warwickshire tenantry in refusal to pay the Protector's war-taxes. Her Puritan son, Fisher Dilke, followed, with a sour-faced Puritan divine, and then came a group of water-colours by Thomas Hood, the author of 'The Song of the Shirt," and an intimate friend of the Dilkes.

SIR THOMAS WENTWORTH.

(FIRST BARON WENTWORTH, DIED 3RD MARCH, 1550-1.)

From a painting ascribed to Theodore Bernardi.

To face p. 230, Vol. II.

One of the ancestors, an earlier Peter Wentworth, son of Sir Nicholas Wentworth (who was Chief Porter of Calais, and knighted by Henry VIII. at the siege of Boulogne), bore the distinction of having been three times sent to the Tower. The first was for a memorable speech on behalf of the liberties of the House of Commons, in 1575. Imprisonment does not seem to have taught him caution, for he was last imprisoned in 1593, because he had "offended Her Majesty," and a prisoner he remained till his death in 1596, occupying the period by writing a *Pithie Exhortation to Her Majesty for Establishing her Successor to the Crowne.*

Engravings of Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Francis Walsingham, Sir Harry Vane, Fulk Greville, Lord Burleigh, William Warham (the friend of Erasmus, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Chancellor), Queen Katharine Parr, Robert Devereux (Earl of Essex), who all came into the Dilke pedigree, hung on the walls. But the most interesting portrait might have been that of Sir Charles himself in fancy dress, the Sir Charles of the early eighties before trouble had lined his face or silvered his hair. This was the painting of Sir Thomas, afterwards Lord Wentworth, who died in 1551 and lies in Westminster Abbey. The reversion to type was so striking that guests would often ask to see again "the best portrait of Sir Charles."*

Among more recent portraits and drawings were a group of trophies, illustrating Sir Charles's experiences in the Franco-German War. Of three passes, the first was carried when he was with the Crown Prince Frederick and the Knights of St. John; the other two showed the change in his sympathies from Germany to France—one from the Commune, the other from the national headquarters at Versailles. Here lay a bullet which struck the wall beside him at Clamart Railway Station, just missing him; pens taken

* This first Baron Wentworth had been knighted for his bravery in the taking of Braye and Montdidier in the expedition to France of 1523, and in 1529 was summoned to Parliament under the title of Lord Wentworth of Nettlestead. He attended Henry VIII. in his interview with the French King at Calais, and under Edward VI. was Lord Chamberlain of the Household and a member of the Privy Council.

from the table of the Procureur Impérial at Wissembourg when the first French town was entered by the Germans; and a trophy of his birthday in 1871, a bit of the Napoleonic Eagle from the Guard-room at the Tuileries, smashed by the crowd on that day, September 4th, when the Third Republic was proclaimed.

Then followed old photographs of members of Parliament and Cabinet Ministers; pictures of Maxstoke Castle, where the elder branch of the Dilkes had its home; etchings by Rajon; framed numbers of *Le Vengeur*, printed after the entry of the Versailles army into Paris during the "semaine sanglante"; addresses, including some in Greek, presented to Sir Charles on various occasions. In the double dining-room a famous portrait of Gambetta—the only portrait taken from life—hung over one mantelpiece. A favourite citation might have been upon the lips: "La France était à genoux. Je lui ai dit, 'Lève-toi'." In 1875 Sir Charles asked Professor Legros to go to Paris and paint Gambetta, who never sat to any other artist. This portrait hangs now in the Luxembourg, and will ultimately be transferred to the Louvre, its destination by Sir Charles's bequest. The only other portrait of Gambetta is that by Bonnat, painted after death. It was the property of Dilke's friend M. Joseph Reinach, and the two had agreed to bequeath these treasured possessions to the Louvre. But the Legros was the more authentic. M. Bonnat said to Sir Charles: "Mine is black and white. Yours is red as a lobster. Mais n'est pas qu'il était rouge comme un homard." Sir Charles himself wrote: "It is Gambetta as he lives and moves and has his being. What more can I ask for or expect?" He always predicted that its painter, whose merit had never in his opinion been adequately recognized, would after death come to his due place.

The rooms had been lined with the grandfather's books, but soon after he came into possession Sir Charles disposed of them. He had a strong belief in keeping round him only the necessary tools for his work, and a large library was an encumbrance to him. But sentiment was strong, and for

some time they remained, till a comment of George Odger's sealed their fate. Looking round the shelves, he remarked with wonderment on the number of the books and the wisdom of the friend who had read them all. Sir Charles, conscious that he had not done so, and that he never should lead the life of a purely literary man, gave away the more valuable, and sold the rest of the collection. Lord Carlingford profited by the Junius papers; Mr. John Murray by the Pope manuscripts; the British Museum by the Caryll papers; and pictures took the place of shelves.*

A number of fine old prints after Raphael were there, and also a photograph of the head of Fortune in Burne-Jones's "Wheel." Sir Charles had commissioned Burne-Jones to paint a head of Fortune, and the correspondence on the subject was sufficiently complete to suggest that the commission had been executed, though as a fact it was never carried out. Sir Charles, who knew something of the difficulty of tracing and attributing pictures, used to declare laughingly that the correspondence might go far to mislead some critic of the future into search after a non-existent original. Anyway, the beautiful head with its closed eyes hung there always, presiding over the varying fortunes of the last tenants of the house.

The far dining-room opened with French windows on a paved terrace, which led by steps to a little garden and to the stables beyond. This terrace was the scene of the morning fencing, when the clashing of foils and Sir Charles's shouts of laughter resounded to the neighbouring gardens. Lord Harcourt recalls the parties in the eighties, as one of the characteristic features of life at 76, Sloane Street. Lord Desborough, then Mr. W. Grenfell, a first-rate fencer, came frequently, and he chronicles the "deadly riposte" of Sir Julian Pauncefote, a regular attendant when he was in town. Mr. R. C. Lehmann, best known as oarsman and boxer, but a fencer as well, came whenever he could. A great St. Bernard, lying waiting for him in the entrance hall, announced his master's presence.

* See Chapter XI. (Vol. I., pp. 161, 162).

Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, of the French Embassy, was one of the most regular attendants. When M. d'Estournelles left London it was to go to Tunis; and further reference in one of Sir Charles's letters betrays the pride with which he learnt that this frequenter of his school had done it credit by "pinking his man" in a duel. M. Joseph Reinach came to fence whenever he was in London; so did Italian masters—for example, the Marchese Fabrizio Panlucci de' Calboli, 'who wants to set up here.'

The *maître d'armes* was senior master at the London Fencing Club, and many young fencers joined these parties to gain experience. Sir Charles was one of the first Englishmen to use the *épée;* he fenced always when in Paris, as in London, and any famous French fencer who visited this country received as a matter of course an invitation to the morning meetings at No. 76.* Sir Theodore Cook, now editor of the *Field*, an antagonist of a later date, and captain of the first international fencing team of 1903, speaks of the considerable reputation of Sir Charles as a fencer, "taking the same place in a quiet way as that Lord Howard de Walden takes towards the public now" (1913).

It was the "unconventional style and the boyish enjoyment of his pastime"—to use Lord Desborough's words—which were characteristic of Sir Charles. His mischievous attempts to distract his adversary's attention, his sudden drops to the ground and bewildering recoveries, his delight at the success of his feints, and contagious merriment, must have gained the sympathy of even the most formal fencer. Many stories of these bouts are told. One is that, having driven an antagonist from the terrace into the Garden Room, into which he was followed by his favourite cat, Sir

* Sir Charles fenced whenever he was abroad, if he could get an opponent. There is a note of 1881: 'August 29th-September 3rd, fenced with de Clairval at La Bourboule.' As late as 1907 he was fencing at Hyères with a master who came over from Toulon on certain days in the week. Also at the end of 1881 he 'started a local fencing club in my own street, and trained some good fencers there, and used to get away to fence there whenever I could find time in the evening hours.' He took part in a competition at this club, and 'won the prize for rapier fencing, being beaten, of course, for foil fencing.'

Charles caught up and threw the protesting animal at his opponent, and dealt his final blow at a foe embarrassed by the double onslaught. Those, however, who know his respect for the dignity of cats will always regard the story as apocryphal.

He delighted in having near him the pictures of his friends, and there were many on the next landing, in the vestibule and the Blue Room to which it led. Mr. Chamberlain, keen-eyed and alert, looked out from Frank Holl's canvas. Fawcett,* painted by Ford Madox Brown in 1871, recalled an earlier friendship, as did the portrait of John Stuart Mill, who, never having sat to any painter, just before his death allowed Watts to paint this for Sir Charles. The picture came home on the day Mill died, and is the original. It was left by will to the Westminster Town Hall. The picture in the National Portrait Gallery is a replica, painted by Sir Charles's leave. By Watts was also a beautiful portrait of Sir Charles himself, the pendant to another which has gone. He and his first wife were painted for each other, but the portrait of her seemed to him so inadequately to render the "real charm" of the dead woman that he destroyed it. The illustrations of this book contain some reproductions of pictures mentioned here.

Reminiscent of earlier family friendships were the Keats relics here and in Sir Charles's own study. Many of these had been bought by old Mr. Dilke from Keats's love, Fanny Brawne, to save them from the indignity of an auction.

In the Blue Room also hung some extraordinarily fine pictures by Blake, who was the friend of Sir Charles's grandfather—among them "The Crucifixion," "The Blasphemer," and "The Devil."† The best loved both by the grandfather and by Sir Charles was the beautiful "Queen Catherine's Dream." A precious copy of *The Songs of Innocence*, hand-painted by Blake and his wife, completed the collection. There were several reliefs by Dalou in the house, the

* Now in the National Portrait Gallery, as also Holl's "Chamberlain," by Sir Charles's bequest.

† "I gave four of my Blakes to the South Kensington Museum in 1884."

finest let in over the mantelpiece of the Blue Room, a copy of Flaxman's Mercury and Pandora. They were executed for Sir Charles when the sculptor was in London in great distress after the Commune, before the amnesty which retrieved his fortunes.

Here also were reminiscences of Provence. One side of the wall was largely covered by a picture of Fréjus by Wislin, painted in the days when St. Raphael and Valescure did not exist, and when the old town rose clear from the low ground as Rome rises from the Campagna, the beautiful Roquebrune, a spur of Sir Charles's beloved Mountains of the Moors, behind it. Sèvres china, vases, bronzes, filled the window ledges, presents to the first Baronet from the Emperor of Austria, Napoleon III., the Crown Prince of Prussia (afterwards the Emperor Frederick), and other royal persons and Governments, with whom his Exhibition work brought him into touch.

At the time when Horace Walpole's collection at Strawberry Hill was sold, Sir Charles's grandfather had stayed at Twickenham, and had brought away many purchases, which peopled the Red and Green Drawing-rooms on the next landing. There was a little group of miniatures in which the "Beautiful Gunnings" and a charming "Miss Temple" figured; in another group, miniatures of Addison, of Mme. Le Brun, of Molière, came from Lady Morgan, whose pen of bog-oak and gold, a gift to her from the Irish people, hung in Sir Charles's own study. The best of the miniatures were those by Peter Oliver, and portrayed Frederick of Bohemia, Elector Palatine, and his wife Elizabeth, Princess Royal of England, afterwards married to Lord Craven; while the finest of all was "a son of Sir Kenelm Digby, 1632." It was one of "several others" which Walpole "purchased at a great price," a purchase which was thus chronicled 'by Mason (Junius) in a letter to Walpole: "I congratulate you on the new miniatures, though I know one day they will become Court property and dangle under the crimson-coloured shop-glasses of our gracious Queen Charlotte." ' The set were all

brought together for the first time since 1842 at the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition.

In these two drawing-rooms, among the medley of enamelled and inlaid tables, royal gifts and collectors' purchases, pictures by Cranach, Mabuse, Van Goyen, Mignard, and many more, some special objects stood out. These were a beautiful Madonna by Memling, on a circular panel, from Lord Northwick's collection; the Strawberry Hill marble version of the famous Bargello relief by Donatello, of the head of the infant St. John the Baptist; and a portrait ascribed to Cornelius Jansen, which, owing to the fleurs-de-lis on the chair, passed by the name of "the Duchess," a portly lady of some dignity, with beautiful white hands and tapering fingers. Lady Dilke's researches, however, placed the lady as Anne Dujardin, an innkeeper of Lyons. The painter, young Karl Dujardin, unable to pay his reckoning, had settled it by marrying his hostess and taking her to Amsterdam, and the fleurs-de-lis on the chair explained that the lady was of French extraction. A Flemish head of Margaret of Austria, Regent of the Netherlands, had come from the Gwydyr Collection. She was much exhibited, but her main interest was due to Sir Charles's intense admiration for the governing capacity and the overshadowed life of the woman. He made two pilgrimages to the church at Brou, near Bourg-en-Bresse, where her sculptured face, closely resembling that of the portrait, looks out from tomb and windows, as she lies side by side with Philibert le Beau, the husband of her love and of her youth, in the magnificent shrine she built for him.

Tapestry hangings divided the rooms from each other, and in many cases only heavy curtains divided them from the stairs.

Above these rooms, Sir Charles's little study, occupied all day by his secretary or himself, was lined with books of reference and piles of despatch-boxes, while every spare foot on the wall held relics of the past. There was the Herkomer portrait of his second wife, there also a copy of a

favourite picture, Bellini's Doge Leonardo Loredano; the portrait of Keats, the only one Severn did from the life—now on loan at the National Portrait Gallery—old political cartoons of Chelsea days, portraits and prints of John Wilkes, and a head of Mazzini. Felix Moscheles (the nephew of Mendelssohn and baby of the Cradle Song) painted Mazzini. Concerning its subject the Memoir notes: 'In the course of 1872 I lost a good friend in Mazzini, whose enthusiasms, Italian and religious, I at that time scarcely shared, but whose conversation and close friendship I deeply valued. . . . The modernness of the Universal Cigarette Smoking Craze may be judged by the fact that Mazzini was the first man I ever knew who was constantly smoking cigarettes.'

The rest was a medley impossible to catalogue: portraits of Charles Lamb, who had been the grandfather's friend; a scarce proclamation by the Pretender; medals and other "Caryll" relics; rapiers, pistols which had travelled with Sir Charles through America; a section of the Trinity Hall boat which was head of the river in 1862 and 1864; seven cups, trophies of rowing, walking, fencing, and shooting matches, with shots dug up on his Toulon estate which were mementoes of the British blockades of the town. Apart from works of reference, a special case was given to autographed books from Hood, Rogers the poet, Gambetta, Laveleye, Louis Blanc, Castelar, Cardinal Manning, Queen Victoria, and many more. In this collection figured all Sir Charles's college prizes, carefully preserved; the family Bible of Lord Leicester, uncle to Sir Philip Sidney, with Dilke family entries; and a little volume in which his second wife had written for him some of the most beautiful passages from "Queens' Gardens" in *Sesame and Lilies;* it was bound in white vellum and "blessed by Ruskin." Here, too, were many Keats letters and books afterwards left by will to Hampstead.

A hoard of treasures filled a little book-room above—his mother's sketches, drawings of his first wife driving

her ponies in Sloane Street, photographs and trinkets of hers, old family caricatures, and also some original sketches by Leech. In the room next to it, occupied by his grandmother till her death in 1882, was a John Collier of the first Lady Dilke.

When the grandmother's sitting-room was used later by Sir Charles's second wife, its main features were a small reference library of French art and a collection of books on Labour. Before the fireplace, on the writing-table as it was in 1885, were bowls of French porcelain filled once a week with fresh flowers from the Toulon garden—paper-white narcissus and purple anemones or big violets of Provençal growth.

Sir Charles's bedroom above was the old nursery, connected with his mother's room, in which he was born, and out of which opened a little room where as a child he slept. His memories of that room were the terrors of a nervous boy, lying alone in the dark, creeping downstairs to sit—a tiny white-robed figure—as near as possible to the drawing-room door, to get comfort from the hum of talk or thunder of the four-handed piano pieces of the period.

His own room for many years was full of drawings by his second wife—her studies under Mulready, her drawings for her *Renaissance*, and other pen-and-ink sketches by her hand, as well as two miniatures of her by Pollet. Some of Frank Dicey's Thames water-colours, one showing Sir Charles's river house at Dockett Eddy, and sketches from his own pen or brush made in his Russian, American, and world-wide wanderings, were here also. In a tiny glazed bookcase by the fire were some "favourite books," a volume or two of Kipling, two volumes of Anatole France, next to a cookery book of 1600, Renan's *Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse*, and a volume of Aubanel. The place of honour was given to a deeply scored copy of Jeremy Taylor's *Golden Grove*.

Beside his great-uncle's Peninsular medal and clasps hung one of Roty's medals, a present from the artist. There were

several of Roty's beautiful medallions in the house, the finest one of Sir Charles himself, explained by the legend on the back as "done for his wife." She had it made, and it was always with her.

There were a good many of W. E. F. Britten's pictures, painted for Sir Charles; the finest was that of "St. Francis preaching to the Birds," a thing of delicate colour and taste, which fitted with his love of the Umbrian Holy Land and went later to the country cottage at Pyrford. There was more force in a large crayon drawing of the Earl of Southampton in the Tower: 'his cat had just arrived down the chimney, probably saving his master's reason by relief of the intolerable tension of lonely confinement.'

The painted cats, or Miss Chaplin's modelled pussies, of which there were many, were seldom without some magnificent living representative at 76, Sloane Street. Zulu, an enormous dark long-haired cat, was very popular; but the last of the "Head Cats," Calino, was so engaging that, at his death about 1908, Sir Charles decided that he should never be replaced. The sway of these cats was despotic, but there were occasions on which their own territory was too limited for them, and messages would come from far down the street demanding the removal of the reigning favourite from some article of furniture where it had ensconced itself with such majesty that a show of violence was out of the question. Among his precious books was a cat story—privately printed and bound—which his second wife had gradually evolved among the wonderful essays in story-telling with which, when he was jaded, she diverted him. This held so large a share in his affection that it nearly displaced his little French copy of the *Contes de Perrault*, containing the adventures of the Marquis of Carabas and Puss in Boots. At the winter cottage at Pyrford, among the pines, was a cattery, where Persian tailless cats, some ginger and some white, were bred. A list of names was kept ready for them, and Babettes, Papillons, Pierrots and Pierrettes, Mistigrises and Beelzebubs, were distributed to friends and

acquaintances. Among the treasured pathetic scraps kept in his father's desk, his executors found a pencil drawing by his wife, the closed window of a silent house, into which the perfectly sketched figure of a little kitten was trying to enter.

In the gracious setting of this house the pervading atmosphere was that of work. The three generations of Dilkes whom it had sheltered had each found the sphere for which he was best fitted, and pursued it tirelessly. The grandfather, beloved old scholar and critic; the father, indefatigable organizer of international exhibitions, horticulturist, newspaper proprietor, member of Parliament—both passed on the traditions of strenuous labour to the great Parliamentarian who was now the occupant of the house. He had absorbed those traditions and far outvied his predecessors, working day and night, bringing down from his bedroom almost illegible memoranda to be deciphered by his secretary in the morning.

From 1880 to 1885 his accession to public office had intensified the work. Messengers with official boxes waited in the hall; callers on political or electoral business, to be interviewed by him or his secretaries, filled the Blue and Red Rooms. After the morning's fencing he passed rapidly from letters to interviews till the Office or the House of Commons claimed him, and his faithful coachman, Charles Grant, who when he died in 1901 had served his master for thirty years, waited for him at the door. Yet with all this the house continued, as in his father's day, to be noted for its hospitality, and the lists of guests in the tattered diaries bear witness to the enormous and varied circle of Sir Charles's friends. Here met foreign diplomatists and artists, English statesmen, and men of letters. Even Cardinal Manning broke his rule against dining out, as "yours is a Cabinet dinner," to come to 76, Sloane Street; but as he met M. de Franqueville, Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, and the friend whom the Cardinal designated to be his biographer, the future author of *France*, J. E. C. Bodley, there must have been talk of other

subjects than "Housing of the Poor." Indeed, absence of "shop" seems to have been one of the charms of these dinners, and Mr. G. W. Osborn, the Chairman of the Chelsea Liberal Association, records that, even when the local leaders met there, some outside element was always introduced which made the talk general.

On another occasion Sir Charles notes: 'July 9th, 1884. On this day Cardinal Manning dined with me, and gave me, in return for a Spanish crucifix with which I had presented him, a miniature of "our patron, St. Charles," which now,' he adds, '(1891 and 1903) hangs in my bedroom. Manning and H. von Bismarck met at my table—I think for the first time.'

His first invitation to Mr. Gladstone, of October 26th, 1882, was to meet the Duc de Broglie: "the leader of the Conservative party in France is at this moment a sufficiently interesting figure for me to think you may like to come to meet him, if you are not engaged."

Such social life, like the morning's rapid turn with the foils or the Sunday afternoon on the river, helped to save him from breakdown under a strain of work persistently intense. Another quality which saved him was his power of turning at once and completely from one occupation to another.

A friend thus describes him as he appeared in 1885: "There was in him a quality of boyishness I have never seen in any other man, coupled with deep gravity and seriousness, and the transition from one mood to the other came with lightning rapidity. Appeal to him on some question of high politics, even at a moment of the most joyous relaxation, and his face gravened, his bearing changed; he pulled himself together with a trick of manner habitual to the end, and the 'boy' became the statesman before it seemed the last echoes of his laughter had died away. We all prophesied for him accession to the highest offices of the State; for though so far the offices which he had held had been of but minor rank, yet he had magnified these offices till they became of the first importance, and his knowledge and authority were as great as were

his charm and his power of gathering round him supporters and friends. He spoke with the authority of one who knows his value to the nation which he serves."

So with Sir Charles's second marriage the house entered on its last phase, and the dark days which followed were lightened for its two occupants by mutual confidence and the support of an abiding love.

CHAPTER XLVIII

FOREIGN POLICY

After a brief stay at Royat, whither doctor's orders had sent Lady Dilke, Sir Charles returned with her, in September, 1886, to the little riverside cottage at Dockett. Thence, as autumn drew on, they moved to the other cottage that had been built among the pines on the sandy ridge near Woking.

No longer having a seat in the House of Commons, Sir Charles again resumed the pen, by which he had first gained distinction.

In the English home politics of 1887, the Irish Question predominated as it had never done before: Home Rule was being thrashed out on every platform. This was a matter on which Sir Charles, to use his own words, "never clearly saw his way"; it was one that he naturally avoided, for it had separated him from his most intimate political associate, and he turned to the field of foreign affairs which had continuously occupied him during his tenure of office, and which, save during the episode of the franchise negotiations, had been his central concern.

For a moment he had the notion of entering into the business of newspaper management. His object was not to secure literary reputation, but to direct and influence public opinion. Early in 1887 he wrote to his friend Mr. Thursfield of the *Times:*

"What I want is work on foreign affairs, or rather external affairs, or foreign and colonial. I would prefer not to write, but to suggest and supervise foreign news, and to work up the subjects of the leaders which others would write. If I wrote, I think I should write less well than other people, because I always write as I speak, and not as people are taught to write."

Nothing came of this idea; but it was a proposal remarkable in its self-depreciation, because it was made when work from his pen was already having a conspicuous success. Beginning in January, 1887, a series of six articles dealing with the existing position of the six Great Powers appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, anonymously, but the author was at once identified. They sent the *Review* into repeated editions. They appeared translated into French in the *Nouvelle Revue*, and were discussed all over Europe. Later in the summer they were published in book form, and called in English *The Present Position of European Politics* and in French *L'Europe en* 1887.

In the author's own words, the articles dealt with "facts and tendencies"; and though he would have been the last to hold himself a prophet, saying that in the nature of things "two years meant for ever in politics," much that he wrote is still of interest, and the suggestion of Mr. Erskine Childers' hero that we should "Read Dilke" is not yet out of date.*

The keynote of the book is contained in the opening words, "The present position of the European world is one in which sheer force holds a larger place than it has held in modern times since the fall of Napoleon." This reign of force the author traced back to 1878, the date of the Treaty of Berlin, but it was originally due, as he pointed out, to the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871, which had left a permanent source of irritation in the European States system. Nevertheless, he recognized that for the time the continuance of Prince Bismarck's policy, based as it was on the maintenance of the Treaty, meant peace, because Prince Bismarck believed peace to be necessary for the maintenance in undiminished strength of the German Empire, wedged in between France and Russia, the former always hostile, the latter an uncertain quantity. An alliance with Austria-Hungary was necessary to this policy: an alliance dictated by the fact that no other was likely to be permanent. Italy,

* *Riddle of the Sands*, by Erskine Childers, popular edition, p. 127. First published March, 1903.

it was true, had recently joined the alliance; but Italy, like Russia, was an uncertain factor, and Sir Charles Dilke believed that, if a critical moment were to come, the desire to get the Trentino would be stronger than the ties of any alliance. The policy of Prince Bismarck was accordingly to prevent a Russo-French alliance, and to help Russia to push into the Far East; to help her also in the Balkans, but not beyond the point at which Austria might remonstrate; and to prevent Austria from seeking anything calculated to precipitate a war between herself and Russia, such as an attempt to add to the position which she had obtained in the Balkan Peninsula under the Treaty of Berlin. This policy also involved keeping Turkey quiet and preventing a league of the Balkan States, lest such a league should irritate Russia and Austria and produce a European conflagration.

General Fadejew, in a celebrated pamphlet* which fluttered all the Chancelleries of Europe in the early seventies, had said that the road from Russia to Constantinople lay through Vienna; and Vienna, Sir Charles agreed with the Russian general, was the centre to be watched, for it was there that the key of European policy was to be found. "Austria interests me," he wrote, when preparing his book, to Sir William White, the Ambassador at Constantinople. "I can't leave London, but I'm thinking of sending a man to Vienna to tell me certain things. If so, to whom should he go?" And he watched the strange development of events in Bulgaria. Early in January he notes an interview with "Dr. Stoiloff, the ablest man except the brutal Stambuloff, and the leader of the Conservative party" in Bulgaria, where the perpetual intrigues of Russian agents, official and unofficial, had recently culminated, in August, 1886, in the kidnapping of the reigning chief of the State, Prince Alexander of Battenberg, and had thereby created an Austrian party: events which were to have many long-drawn-out consequences, as the following century to its own cost was to find out. Bulgaria from this time began to move in

* General Fadejew, *Über Russland's Kriegsmacht und Kriegspolitik*, Leipzig, 1870, translated from the Russian.

an orbit of her own, distinct from, and often unfriendly to, the other Balkan States.

In 1887 it was still a current belief—especially on the part of many of Sir Charles's own political friends—that Germany was eagerly watching for an opportunity to seize the German provinces of Austria, and that Austria was eagerly watching for an opportunity 'to go to Salonica,' as the current phrase had it. The two propositions were almost mutually destructive, but, without insisting on this rather obvious consideration, Sir Charles was well aware that (even apart from reasons of international policy) Germany could not desire the disruption of Austria, because the German provinces of Upper and Lower Austria and Styria did not lie next to North Germany, but were cut off from it by countries in which the most enterprising of all Slavonic peoples—the Czechs of Bohemia—"hated the Germans with a deadly hatred," and already, even in 1887, had got the upper hand. Count Bismarck himself had resisted—and successfully—the desire of the military party to annex Bohemia in 1866 after Sadowa. The permanent exclusion of Austria and the House of Hapsburg from Germany was also no sudden or ephemeral policy. In the middle of the seventeenth century, as the author of the *Holy Roman Empire* had reminded his readers, it had been proposed by the famous publicist Philippe Chemnitz, who wrote under the name of "Hippolytus à Lapide," as the surest means of securing a permanent unity of some kind in Germany.* It had been adopted by the leaders in the Frankfurt Parliament of 1848-49, and Count Bismarck was the inheritor of these traditions when he finally expelled the House of Hapsburg in 1866, and thus translated ancient theories into modern facts. It was therefore highly improbable, to say the least, that only a few years after the Treaty of Berlin he should be engaged in an attempt to nullify his own work.†

* See Bryce, *Holy Roman Empire*, chap. xx., p. 386; Louis Léger, *Histoire de l'Autriche-Hongrie*, chap. xv., p. 258.

† On January 14th, 1849, the Frankfurt Parliament voted the exclusion of Austria from Germany.

Austria, Sir Charles Dilke pointed out, some day by mere competition with Russia, if that Power made further advances, might perhaps be forced forward unwillingly to Salonica; but by thus seizing Macedonia—a far larger proposition than that of the annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, and in many respects a different one—it was clear she would "increase her military weakness, would deeply offend the Servians, the Greeks, and the Bulgarians, and by increasing the number of her Slavonic subjects would only hasten her own break-up." Here, in fact, lay the real danger to the "Eastern Empire." Prince Bismarck, as a matter of fact, was of all men in Europe the man who most desired to keep Austria alive. "It is a necessity to him that she should continue to exist. Once destroy Austria, and Germany is left to fight it out with France and Russia without assistance, for in this case Italy would not move," notwithstanding the recently renewed Triple Alliance. That a military party existed in Austria which might desire to go to Salonica, and would also rejoice in a war with Italy, Sir Charles was well aware; but he saw no reason to believe that it would succeed in forcing these adventures on the Ballplatz, or on the statesmen of Hungary, who above all things dreaded an increase of the Slavonic elements in the Empire. The Austria-Hungary of 1887 was the Austria-Hungary of the long rule of Count Taafe at Vienna, of M. Koloman Tisza at Buda-Pesth, and of Count Kalnoky at the Ballplatz; and it was not unreasonable at that time to consider it possible that, "after the division of the respective spheres of influence of Bulgaria, Greece, and Servia, in Macedonia, Austria might gradually increase her influence in the Balkan States; and if she would take the bold step of making up an arrangement for evacuating part of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, so as to show she had no intention of going southwards to Salonica, she might bring together in a general understanding with herself the small States and the Turks." This, however, Sir Charles admitted, was probably impracticable, "as Austro-Hungarian pride would effectually

prevent the abandonment of any portion of Bosnia." But so late as 1909 Dilke told Lord Fitzmaurice, when, at the time of her final annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, Austria-Hungary had retired from the Sandjak of Novi Bazar, that he thought the British Foreign Office "had made too great a fuss" over the annexation, which had been certain to come, sooner or later.*

Mr. Robert Lowe is credited with having said that a metaphysician resembled a blind man groping in a dark room for a black hat that was not there. The comparison might almost have been applied to the Foreign Minister of the Dual Empire, vainly seeking for a coherent policy among the mists and cross-currents of rival nationalities. The charge to be made against the foreign policy of Austria-Hungary was, in fact, not that she had got a policy—good or bad, ambitious or the reverse—but that it was almost impossible as a rule to ascertain whether she had any policy at all: the explanation being that her internal problems paralyzed her action abroad. "It was difficult to be a patriot in Austria, for nobody exactly knew to the representatives of what race, tongue, or language, his allegiance was due." "Austria was indeed of all countries in the world by far the most difficult to govern, and as a necessity of her condition she must before all things long for peace. . . . Under her many difficulties caused by racial divisions she had become constitutionally timid and naturally slow to move, and the outlook was far from promising . . . nor had Prince Bismarck"—notwithstanding the terms of the Triple Alliance—"bound Germany to espouse all the quarrels of Austria, no matter where and with whom." It had been said, and by Prince Bismarck himself, that the bones of not a single Pomeranian grenadier should be allowed to whiten in a Balkan quarrel.† "The only real question worth asking was: Will Austria resist Russian pretensions, and will she,

* Lord Fitzmaurice was then Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and represented the Foreign Office in the House of Lords. See further as to Sir Charles Dilke's views on the events of 1908, Chapter LVIII.

† Speech in the Reichstag, December 16th, 1876.

if in danger of conquest, be supported by allies, or will she yield and take her share of the spoils ?"*

The long-standing jealousies, also, of Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Greece, in regard to the future of the Adriatic coast, Sir Charles Dilke felt were not sufficiently appreciated in England, where public opinion was too much inclined to see the Turk and the Slav only in every question concerned with the Balkan Peninsula. When Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in 1880-81, he had given a strong support to the proposals in regard to Albania of Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, which had the approval of Mr. Goschen, then Special Ambassador to the Porte—proposals which were framed with a view to the ultimate autonomy of the country, and were not accepted by the European Commission of Reforms, mainly owing to the opposition of Austria-Hungary.† But in *The Present Position of European Politics* it is seen how the author's increasing confidence in the future of Greece led to a change of opinion on this, the most intricate, perhaps, of all diplomatic questions connected with the Near East. He now advocated as large an extension as possible of the existing northern boundary of Greece, and held that the rest of Albania should be joined to Greece by some form of personal union, which ultimately might grow into a closer tie, bearing in mind the friendly co-

* *The Present Position of European Politics*, pp. 185, 193, 194, 205, 206, 219, 221-224.

† See *Life of Lord Goschen*, vol. i., p. 215. These proposals were revived in 1912, and, which is remarkable, by Count Berchtold, the Foreign Minister of Austria-Hungary, in a despatch in favour of "progressive decentralization." See an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, April, 1913: "Austria and Italy have been rivals for influence in Albania, as Austria and Russia were rivals in Macedonia. It was because of this rivalry that the Treaty of Berlin, so far as it applied to the European provinces of Turkey, was never properly carried into effect. For the same reason the Fitzmaurice proposal of 1880 was defeated by the opposition of Vienna. The suggestion was that a greater Albania should be created, which would have been autonomous under a European guarantee. It is among the ironies of history that this scheme, rejected by Austria when it came from a friendly and neutral source, should have been put forward by the Austrian Foreign Office itself thirty-two years later. Count Berchtold's Circular Note of August 14th, 1912, revived the Fitzmaurice programme. The proposition came too late."

operation of Greeks and Albanians in the War of Independence against Turkey, and the fact that a strong Albanian element already existed in the Greek kingdom.* A European Congress seemed to him the only method to avoid the ultimate arbitrament of war in this mass of tangled questions, but experience had shown that a Congress was useless unless the Great Powers had settled the main questions beforehand in agreement among themselves. Experience had unfortunately also shown the extreme difficulty of obtaining any such agreement.

"Austria ought to have been the heir of Turkey; the protector of a Greece extended to include Albania, Macedonia, the Islands, and the coast to Constantinople and down to Asia Minor; the friend of Servia and Roumania, and what not." But these things remained in the class of visions, even if occasionally some Austrian or Hungarian statesman, like Herr von Kallay, seemed disposed to grasp them, and to renew the tradition of the forward policy attributed to Prince Eugène of Savoy and the Archduke Charles. Hungary also had made Roumania her antagonist by her illiberal policy in regard to the navigation of the Danube. Any permanent confederation of the Balkan States as distinct from a temporary alliance for some special and defined object, such as a possible attack on Turkey, seemed therefore no longer possible, especially after the recent events in Bulgaria. Meanwhile there was to be peace, because Prince Bismarck so willed it.†

The overmastering sense of the importance of whatever happened at Vienna and Constantinople—of which every page of *The Present Position of European Politics* is the evidence—will largely explain Sir Charles Dilke's views on another question. It has been seen that he was amongst the strongest advocates of an active policy in Egypt in 1882,

* *The Present Position of European Politics*, pp. 146, 148, 193, 206, 214-217, 232, 237, 238.

† See *Der Krimkrieg und die Österreichische Politik*, von Heinrich Friedjung, chap. ii., p. 16 (Stuttgart und Berlin, 1907); Louis Léger, *Études Slaves : L'Autriche-Hongrie et la Question d'Orient*, p. 395.

agreeing in this with Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Hartington. But at an early period after the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir he pronounced himself, when the question arose, in favour of the earliest possible evacuation of the country, and contemplated it as a possibility of the immediate future.* Egypt to him, considered from the point of view of British interests, was subsidiary to Constantinople. All that really signified was the right of passage through the Suez Canal, which could, he believed, be secured by international arrangement and the neutralization of the country, a plan for which, as already seen, was being actually discussed by Mr. Gladstone's Government when it fell. Egypt, in fact, he regarded as part of Asia rather than of Africa, and he believed that time would make this more clear than ever, in proportion as railways were developed in Syria, Arabia, and Asia Minor. In this connection Constantinople, not Alexandria or Cairo, seemed to him the decisive factor: an opinion which brought him into opposition with those who held the view that since the occupation of Egypt by British troops events at Constantinople had become comparatively unimportant to this country. He also feared that if some great European crisis were to arise, in which Great Britain was involved, the occupation of Egypt might be a hindrance rather than a source of strength, and might hamper our exertions in other lands.

He had, however, no fear of allowing the Bosporus and the Dardanelles to be opened under suitable conditions to the passage of Russian ships of war, but only on the condition laid down by Sir William White, that the right accorded to Russia must be accorded to the ships of war of other nations; and this partly out of regard to the dignity of the British flag, and partly because any exclusive right accorded

* Sir Charles wrote in the *Speaker* of January 23rd, 1892, in reply to Admiral Maxse:

"Admiral Maxse appears to think that my views in favour of evacuation have been recently formed. . . .

"There was a time, *before* the intervention of the condominium with France by Lord Derby, when I held a different view; but it was not only formed under circumstances very different from those which have now existed for fourteen years, but also at a time when I had not given special consideration to our probable naval and military position in the event of war."

to Russia would be resisted by the States bordering on the Black Sea and by those interested in the trade and navigation of the Danube. But the opening of the Straits was one thing, the possession of Constantinople by Russia was another, and in his opinion would cause a European convulsion; for he saw in Constantinople what has since been termed "the great strategic centre of the world":* the meeting-place and clearing-house of the trade and politics of three continents.

"Russia at Constantinople," he wrote, "would mean the destruction of Austria and the Russification of a large portion of her Slavs. When Austria had disappeared or had been transformed out of all knowledge, Germany, placed between France and Russia, would be still weaker in her military position than she is at present. It is no doubt impossible that Germany can really contemplate that contingency with complete satisfaction. And if she cannot get other people to help Austria to keep Russia away from Constantinople, it is probable that she would be forced to interfere to help to do so, however stoutly her rulers may make the opposite declaration. One of my most valued correspondents, whose criticisms have been of the highest use to me, admits that to place Turkey at the head of a Balkan Confederation would be 'adding a badger to your three unfriendly cats and altogether hostile dog'; but, nevertheless, he thinks that such a combination would be possible on account of the overwhelming dread of the danger of absorption by Russia; and I think it right to state his view, although I am unable to modify that which I have said as to the difficulties which the dispute for Macedonia causes."†

In the autumn of 1891 this note occurs in the Memoir: 'John Morley having made a speech in favour of the cessation of the Egyptian occupation, I wrote to tell him how pleased I was, and in his reply he asked why we should go on mechanically applauding Lord Salisbury's foreign policy, which left this danger standing.'

Mr. Morley's satisfaction was, however, not shared by

* The expression was used by Mr. Winston Churchill in a speech on November 15th, 1915, in the House of Commons.

† *The Present Position of European Politics*, pp. 372, 373.

Mr. Chamberlain, who wrote in January, 1892, 'to implore me to have regard to the opinion of society about Egypt.'

"I do not mean fashionable society," he added, "but political society, and the great majority of cultivated politicians. I think you do go out of your way to offend them when you advocate evacuation of Egypt, and I ask you to consider if it is worth your while. It is not necessary for your constituents, and with regard to the others, there is no need to add to their causes of anger against you. My advice is, 'Be as Radical as you like, be Home Ruler if you must, but be a little Jingo if you can.'"

The correspondence had begun in the autumn of 1891, when Sir Charles wrote the following letter:

"PYRFORD BY MAYBURY,
"NEAR WOKING,
"*October 19th*, 1891.

"MY DEAR CHAMBERLAIN,

"I have never said that there are not conceivable circumstances in which it would be better for us to be in Egypt. I'm going to try and discuss them in the book I am at work on. *Re* command of the sea against France. We have not quite a sufficient force to blockade Brest and Toulon. Lefevre and most of our sailors contemplate only 'masking' Toulon by a fleet at Gibraltar, and using the Cape route. In this case we could not reinforce Egypt except from India, and not, of course, from India if we were at war with Russia too.

"I am in favour of a stronger navy, and attempting blockade, though it is not *certain* that it can be made *for certain* successful. Still Colomb is a better authority than Beresford, etc. I mean 'Admiral Colomb,' not Sir John. The difficulty, even if blockades are possible, is that France keeps building after us so as always to be without the limits which would make it possible. Lefevre will support Mr. G. in cutting down the navy on this ground—*i.e.*, will prove by figures that every time we lay down nine ships the French lay down six or seven.

"I think that in the long-run France will beat Germany. She will fight her some day single-handed on a point in which Austria and Italy will not move, nor Russia either. Then, if Germany gets the best of it, the others will 'mediate.'

"Yours ever,
"CHS. W. D."

'November, 1891, we spent in France. . . . While I was away I had a correspondence with Chamberlain about his speech on Egypt' (in reply to Morley), 'and pointed out to him,' says the Memoir, 'that he had changed his mind so completely about evacuation that it was hardly prudent in him not frankly to admit the change of mind, as he had done in at least one speech previously.' He replied:

'"I have looked the matter up, and I think it is quite true that in 1884 we were all for evacuation as early as possible. But I did not then estimate properly the magnitude of the task we had undertaken, nor did I know how splendidly it would be performed by Baring and his colleagues. Baring himself began as a strong advocate for evacuation."

'In my answer, I said that Baring had only changed his mind in the way in which all people are apt to change their minds when they are employed as the agents of a policy, and I combated Chamberlain's military views, which were, in fact, for defending Egypt by the fleet—that fleet which is expected to do everything!'

Sir Charles set out in an article in the *Speaker* all the pledges to evacuate which had been given by the Liberal Government and repeated by Lord Salisbury. Thereupon Mr. Morley, whose general views on foreign policy were not as a rule at all the same as those of Sir Charles, wrote from Biarritz, where he was in Mr. Gladstone's company, that he had read the *Speaker* with enormous satisfaction. It would have a stimulating effect in quarters where a little stimulus was much needed, and had given much satisfaction to other people in Biarritz besides himself.

'"Quarters" of course meant Rosebery,' is Sir Charles's comment, and he adds:

'In order to meet the Rosebery objection to evacuation, I wrote an article for the January *Fortnightly*, of which the editor changed nothing but the title. I had called it "Lords Salisbury and Rosebery," and he changed it to "Conservative Foreign Policy."'

At a later date, in a letter* to Mr. Gladstone during his last Premiership, Dilke summed up his views when a debate

* This letter was apparently written on April 14th, 1893:
"Those of us who bitterly dislike the occupation of Egypt by a British force have been loth to add to your work before and during

was about to take place in the House of Commons, and four days later he notes: 'On April 18th I had a long interview with Mr. Gladstone, who sent for me, on my letter. The only thing he said worth remembering was, "Jingoism is stronger than ever. It is no longer war fever, but earth hunger."'

In 1887 the possibility of a German attempt to violate the neutrality of Belgian territory, notwithstanding the treaty of guarantee of 1839, which Prussia herself had signed, was

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a session in which, not to speak of the ordinary demand on the time of a Prime Minister, your unprecedented relation to the chief measure makes it the duty of your supporters to confine themselves to helping clear the road. Naught else could have excused us from having hitherto refrained from pressing the state of Egypt on the consideration of yourself, or of the House of Commons. It is only because since the publication of a recent despatch we feel that the time has nearly come for making up one's mind to be for ever silent upon the question, and because I cannot do so, given the strong feeling that I have with regard to it, without one last attempt to cause some change in a 'temporary' situation now crystallizing into permanency, that I venture to address you. I ask for no reply. I shall have to bring the question before the House of Commons. I have no illusions as to what is likely to be the result of so doing. Sir E. Grey will tell us that the occupation is still 'temporary,' but must last, 'for the sake of Egypt,' till we can 'with safety' leave: and so it will continue, with all its dangers to ourselves, till the next great war. Whoever else may again raise the Egyptian question in the future, I shall not. Vote I must, whenever it comes before the House, but I need not do more.

"Not one word of blame of anyone will fall from me when I raise the question on first going into Committee on Civil Estimates. It seems to me, I confess—but I shall try to keep the opinion to myself—that it would have been, on the whole, the safest course to have done in 1892 that which Lord Granville, under your guidance, did in 1880, and to have ourselves proposed, on the very day of the accession to office of the new Government, the policy which we thought best in the interest of the country and had supported in Opposition. Lord Granville congratulated himself, and with justice, on the promptitude with which, before the Russians could say a word to him as to the complete fulfilment of the Treaty of Berlin, he had told the Ambassador, in the first minute of their first interview, that the Government would insist on that fulfilment. Had the present Secretary of State, at his first interview with the French Ambassador, made a similar communication with regard to Egypt (at least so far as to propose to resume the negotiations of 1887), we should, perhaps, have avoided many evils. I share to the full the belief, which you expressed in such admirable terms a couple of years ago, that the long-lasting occupation of Egypt by our forces is the cause of all the difficulties by which our foreign policy, and even our position in Europe, are oppressed. Our hands are not free, and never will be free, so long as the occupation continues. But ills more direct are likely to fall upon us; and no one can look forward without the

again attracting attention owing to a sudden renewal of war-like apprehensions on the Continent. The position of Luxemburg was a kindred question, though the international guarantee was of a far more uncertain character than in the case of Belgium. Sir Charles, as already related, had returned from his work in France during the war of 1870 with a profound conviction that a spirit of reckless violence was abroad in Germany, which would stop at nothing if favour-

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gravest dread to the prospect of our being drawn, step by step, into a situation in which we shall be driven to arrest the persons of the young Khedive and those of his advisers who possess the confidence of all that is intelligent among the Egyptian people; or (as seems hinted in Lord Rosebery's despatch) to insist upon a deposition.

"In the discussions as to the occupation of Egypt which occurred in the Cabinet, before I was a member of it, in 1882, even before the expedition (for the occupation was foreseen), I took a share, as Lord Granville was good enough to consult me on the papers circulated by his colleagues. As far as I am concerned, I have never budged from the principles of a memorandum which I wrote on July 4th, 1882; but those principles were far more excellently stated by you in a memorandum of the beginning of September, 1882—before Tel-el-Kebir—a memorandum which was approved by men now so hostile to your views as Sir Auckland Colvin and Sir Edward Malet. Sir E. Baring, now, as Lord Cromer, so bitterly opposed to us, in a paper of September or October, 1882, and Chamberlain in his paper of about October 21st, 1882, both pointed out how essential it was that our occupation should be really temporary, and that our condition—that we should leave behind us a 'stable' state of things—depended on and meant what Chamberlain called 'the extension of Egyptian liberties': the convoking, if not of a truly representative Assembly, at least of the Notables. Lord Dufferin, in December 1882, wrote to me that he would sooner run any risk than abandon the representative institutions proposed for Egypt in his famous scheme. Yet now the French are bidding the Khedive call together, against Lord Dufferin's virtual successor, this very Assembly of Notables, which Lord Cromer, such is his present policy, dare not call. The conception of this Assembly was the act of yourself, supported by Lord Granville and Sir William Harcourt and supported on paper by Lord Dufferin and Sir E. Baring, and opposed by Lord Hartington, by the then Chancellor, and by Lord Northbrook. This 'extension of Egyptian liberties,' which was our pride, which was our excuse for that 'short prolongation' of the occupation, to which I was myself opposed—an extension of liberties which has not been carried into practical effect by us—is certain to result in a declaration by the Notables, when they meet, as within this year, through the French Agent's influence, they will, that they are rootedly opposed to our presence in their land.

"It may be said that neither the Turks nor the French have pressed us, directly, to come out. The Turks will never really press us. The Sultan is forced by Moslem public opinion to ask us to leave Egypt, but he is in fact personally anxious that we should stay there

able circumstances offered a temptation to action; and in his opinion the absence of any fortifications at Liége and Namur afforded such a temptation. The point had been till then little discussed in England, though General Brialmont had written in the *Revue de Belgique* on the subject. Sir Charles's view having been questioned, that the danger to Belgium's neutrality for military and other reasons was from Germany alone, he drew attention to the enormous accumulation of supplies of every kind in the entrenched camp of

to keep Mahdism in the desert and representative institutions in the shade. The French have also their inner policy—their Rothschilds to keep in good humour—and two currents, one political and one financial, with which to deal. M. Waddington expressed to you at Hawarden a mere desire for exchange of views between the Cabinets. He was naturally anxious not to be refused in any direct request. But French public opinion is exasperated against us; only one man in France believes a word we say, and our diplomatists and admirals behave as though they represented German instead of neutral interests. We are responsible for tempting Italy to stay in the alliance of the Central Powers, to her own hurt.

"None of these things shall I be able to say when I bring the question before the House of Commons. To do so would involve statements based on private letters and statements as to Cabinet differences of 1882, which I cannot make. We shall be compelled to rely chiefly upon the declarations of Lord Salisbury, which were summed up in his words of May, 1887, to the effect that the occupation entails on us 'heavy sacrifices, without adequate return either in peace or in war.'

"Having given attention for some years past to our general position as a nation, feeling as I do, with you, how adversely it is affected by the prolongation of the 'temporary' occupation, which, as matters stand, seems likely to endure till the next war, even should it be postponed till half a century hence, I cannot but feel miserable at the situation of this affair, and I once more ask your pardon for in this way liberating my mind, or, I fear, rather discharging upon you, regardless of your prodigious avocations, this last expression of a regret deeper than that which I have previously entertained on any public question.

"Through the mischiefs of the occupation there now seems to come no single ray of light. The present year will not pass over without a change in the local situation at Cairo, from which a conference is likely to result. A passage near the end of Lord Rosebery's despatch shows that he is prepared to have a conference forced upon him. Had we invited it, such a conference would be to us the blessing that it will be to others. Would it not at least be best that we should call that conference on the first opportunity rather than have it thrust down our throats?

"This letter has not been shown to anyone, and needs, as I said, no reply, but I should be glad if it were not handed to anyone outside of your own circle. It has not been mentioned to anyone except Mr. Herbert Gladstone."

Cologne as of itself sufficient in military eyes to prove the truth of what he said. He considered also that the reduction of our horse artillery greatly impaired the possibility of Great Britain affording really effectual military assistance to Belgium, and that the recent utterances of the principal organ of the Conservative party, the *Standard*, and of the writers in the *National Review*, that intervention in support of Belgium "would be not only insane but impossible," showed that the public opinion of Great Britain was no longer unanimous as it had been in 1870-71.* This dispassionate consideration of the chances of England's intervening single-handed and without allies, in the case of a European war, to protect the neutrality of an unfortified Belgium, led to statements that he was opposed to such a step, and he had to point out in reply that for years he had consistently expressed the contrary view, but that he was now dealing with facts and tendencies, not with his own wishes.† Shortly after the appearance of this article, discussion in Belgium led to the introduction of a Government Bill for the fortification of the towns upon the Meuse, and it was afterwards decided to fortify Namur and Liége.

Estimating the probabilities of a Continental war, he thought that Russia came next to England in staying power, because her enormous army formed a smaller proportion of her working class than in the case of any other great Continental Power. Notwithstanding his suspicions of her policy, he spoke of Russia with a deep and discriminating interest born of numerous visits to all parts of her dominions, and deprecated the attitude of those Englishmen whose dislike of Russia had done harm to the cause of sense and truth by exaggeration, and had led them to ignore "her power and the marvellous patriotism of her

* The questions connected with the Belgian and Luxemburg guarantees are very fully discussed in a recent work, *England's Guarantee to Belgium and Luxemburg*, by C. P. Sanger and H. T. J. Norton. See also chapter i. of *War: Its Conduct and Legal Results*, by Dr. Baty and Prof. J. H. Morgan; *The Present Position of European Politics*, pp. 42-48, 73, 321-323.

† *British Army*, chap. ii., p. 55.

people." "In the union of patriotism with religion I know no nation which can approach them." There could be no doubt in any reasonable mind of her real and lasting strength. But her unlimited power of self-deception; the necessary instability of a policy resting upon the will of a single man; her misgovernment of Poland and her alienation of Bulgaria, constituted dangers which it was idle to ignore. He, however, set against these weaknesses her popularity with all the Slav nations; her influence in the Baltic provinces of Germany, and even with the Poles, "who, like everyone else of Slavonic race, seem born with a hatred of the Teutons."

"The only foreigner who is known to the Russian peasantry is the German, and the name for German and for foreigner with the peasantry is the same, and the hatred of the 'dumb men,' as they call their German neighbours, is intense. The peasantry know little of the English, and if you listen to their sentiments you discover that it is their belief that one day there will be between *them* and Germany a war compared with which, their soldiers say, that of 1870 will be child's play, and that if Germany wins this will not be the end, but that war after war will follow until Germany is destroyed."

"Because Russia is very violent in her language and her acts, we often fail to see how a peasantry, which an aristocratic government or a government of political economists could never win, is won over by her to her rule. The Moscow men failed in Bulgaria, but in Poland they succeeded, and in the Baltic provinces, too, their methods and their policy have not been wanting, and the problems that have so long perplexed this country in her relations with Ireland would have been solved in a week by Samarin, or Miliutin, or Prince Tcherkasky."*

The popular phrases which dubbed Sir Charles Dilke as "anti-German" or "anti-Russian" were never more curiously misapplied. The flaw to be found even in the mental constitution of Gambetta's great personality, as shown by his antagonism to Russia, had no part in his friend's outlook; nor did Sir Charles's friendship for all things French make

* *Present Position of European Politics*, pp. 125, 134.

him an enemy to Germany, though the possibility of conjuring "the German peril" was ever in his mind. But he doubted the wisdom of the wavering counsels which began with "lying down to Germany," and were to be marked by the cession of Heligoland. Strong men and strong Governments recognize and respect one another; and in dealing with Germany he believed that it was necessary never to forget this trite yet valuable warning.

If personal friendships and political sympathy made Sir Charles, as the previous chapters have shown, look constantly to France as the natural ally of Great Britain, and also her most desirable ally, neither friendships nor sympathies could blind him to the constant danger arising from the instability of French Administrations, and the consequent difficulty of relying on any certainty in arrangements projected for joint action. Of this the events connected with Egypt had been a most conspicuous illustration. Nor were these the only dangers: for the best friends of France were painfully aware of the immense influence exercised by powerful financial interests both in her domestic and in her foreign affairs, and by the growth of fierce antagonisms on home questions which seemed to tear the country asunder and paralyze her position abroad. Numerous questions, not only in Egypt, but elsewhere in Africa; the old quarrels about the Newfoundland fisheries, on which Sir Charles was constantly putting his finger as a possible cause of a serious quarrel; and increasing jealousies in the Pacific, contributed to produce a condition of permanent tension for many years in the relations of the two countries, until the Fashoda incident in 1898 brought a crisis which cleared the air. Two of the ablest men in France, M. Jules Ferry and M. Hanotaux, were, to say the least, not friendly to Great Britain, and a plan which Sir Julian Pauncefote* had suggested in 1884 of attempting to bring all outstanding questions with France into one great settlement, fell still-born, to be vivified, but twenty years

* Then Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and afterwards Lord Pauncefote and Ambassador at Washington.

later, by Lord Lansdowne in more favourable circumstances.

In all possible complications Sir Charles relied much on Italy's close friendship for England—notwithstanding her entry into the Triple Alliance—a friendship due to permanent gratitude for the support which she had received from Lord Russell, Mr. Gladstone, and Lord Palmerston, at the crisis of her fate in 1859; and also to the offer to her of a joint occupation of Egypt in 1882—an offer rejected indeed, but fruitful of good feeling.

But more important even than any question of alliances was, he insisted, the necessity that Great Britain should know her own mind, and have a definite policy in regard to the future of Constantinople and of Egypt, and in regard to the Belgian guarantee. Army organization itself obviously depended on policy, and in this connection there was a danger at home greater, perhaps, than any originating abroad.

"It is too much the case with us in England," he wrote, "that when we are occupied with the consideration of the Irish problem, or dealing with the circumstances which most often lead to the rise and fall of Ministries, we allow the foreign affairs of the country to be transacted in the dark: with an absence of control which, owing to the efficiency of our Foreign Office, may produce no ill, but also with an absence of knowledge which cannot be advantageous. On the other hand, when some awkward circumstance arises, a disproportionate weight is attached to it by those who have wilfully remained in ignorance of the true position, and the diplomacy of the country is suddenly unduly hampered by criticism which rests on no foundation of fact."

Speaking from experience, he uttered a warning as to the danger of uninstructed debates and foolish questions—then so frequent—on foreign affairs in the House of Commons, and the harm done by them abroad. He spoke of the tendency to take advantage of some rebuff in foreign affairs for party motives, and urged that, as secrecy was not to be hoped for, members should at least try to inform themselves and the electorate, and avoid "periods of ignorant calm" or "equally ignorant panic." In this connection he never

ceased to insist on the weakness of our position abroad, owing to the deficient strength and want of organization of our army; the small results shown for the immense amount spent; the insufficient stock of arms and ammunition, and the poor reserves of rifles; and he urged that, whatever our economies, none should fall upon equipment or reserves of material. Such economies he stigmatized as a "horrible treachery to the interests of the country."*

* The military situation as a whole is discussed in chapter vi. of *The Present Position of European Politics*, "The United Kingdom."

CHAPTER XLIX

PUBLIC LIFE AND RETURN TO PARLIAMENT

1886–1894

PATHWAYS of return to political life soon began to open to Sir Charles Dilke. In November, 1886, Mr. Labouchere wrote:

"It looks as though Chamberlain will be the scapegoat. At present his going over bag and baggage to the Whigs has utterly disgusted the Radicals. As long as Gladstone lives things will go on fairly with us, but after—the deluge. The Radical M.P.'s are regretting your not being in, as they would have accepted you as the leader."

In the autumn of 1886 the Council of the Chelsea Liberal Association unanimously asked him to be their candidate (for Parliament), but he replied that he could not serve the borough to his own satisfaction while so large a section of the public still attached weight to the "gross calumnies" with which he had been assailed. He was, however, from the autumn of 1887, increasingly active in local affairs, both on the Vestry and the Board of Guardians,* and also on the newly formed Library Committee, on which he served for three years, till both the local libraries were established and opened.

To M. Joseph Reinach he wrote in April, 1887: "I have a splendid position as a writer, and writing projects which will occupy me for three years at least; and if any great

* In the winter of 1888, Sir Charles was unanimously elected Chairman of the Board of Guardians, as also of the Vestry ('as was the case in subsequent years'). He wrote to Mr. Chamberlain: "I've taken the chairmanship of the Chelsea Board of Guardians, so am keeping my hand in on the prevention of obstruction. I am forced to begin gradually with them, and have only as yet ruled that I cannot *let two speak at once.*"

calamity should occur which would force me back into public life—such as war with Russia, for example—I do not know that I should like the change." Nor was the political scene attractive at this moment. His friends were tearing each other asunder; and not only his political friends—both parties were rent with faction.

'On October 1st, 1886, Chamberlain called and gave me an interesting picture of the political state. He seemed to think that he could keep Mr. Gladstone out for life, and was persuaded that Randolph would give him all he wanted and leave Hartington and Salisbury in the lurch. Randolph had promised him to have an anti-Jingo foreign policy, leaving Turkey to her fate, and to pacify Ireland with the National Councils scheme, modified into two Councils, or into Provincial Councils, to suit Ulster; and Churchill had also promised him procedure reform—that is, a sharper closure—and a three-acres-and-a-cow policy for England.

'There was an article in the *Morning Post*, October 2nd, representing Churchill's democratic views, but in the later autumn (while Chamberlain was away abroad) Churchill was beaten in the Cabinet both on his Irish scheme and also on the amendments which he proposed to make in the Local Government (England) Bill in the three-acres-and-a-cow direction. On December 17th Chamberlain, who had returned from abroad, came to lunch with me, furious at the defeat of Randolph Churchill. He found no fault with the Irish policy' (which was strongly coercionist), 'or with the foreign policy of the Cabinet; but he was anxious to defeat them on their Local Government (England) Bill, if it was not altered back again to suit his policy. Ultimately a compromise on this matter was arranged.'

For a moment it seemed as if Chamberlain's anger with the Tory party was going to drive him back into his old associations. On December 31st,

'Chamberlain and John Morley came in together to lunch, Chamberlain having been asked and Morley not, and it was somewhat startling. "Chamberlain thinks that he can get Mr. Gladstone by the bait of 'Four times Prime Minister' to accept his terms. On the other hand, Mr. Gladstone thinks that he can detach Chamberlain from Hartington. Conferences are sitting:

Harcourt, Herschell, and Morley, meeting Chamberlain and Trevelyan. Hartington is crusty at this. Chamberlain has threatened Hartington with the consequences if he, as he wants to, supports a reactionary Local Government Bill of Salisbury's. Chamberlain has written to Salisbury as to this Local Government Bill, and received a dilatory reply." He told me the whole long history of Randolph's troubles with the Cabinet which preceded his resignation; first on procedure, as to which he finally obtained his own way, secondly as to foreign affairs, thirdly as to allotments, fourthly as to Local Government, and fifthly as to finance. Churchill always stood absolutely alone, and, being in a minority of one, could only get his way at all by continually tendering his resignation. At last he resigned once too often, as it was of course on the wrong subject; Salisbury jumped at it, and accepted it in a cool letter when Churchill did not mean it in the least. It was only the classical annual resignation of a Chancellor of the Exchequer against his colleagues of the army and navy. The Budget always involves the resignation either of the Secretary of State for War and First Lord of the Admiralty, or else of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but hitherto they have always managed to make it up.'

Within a fortnight Sir Charles ' was hearing from all sides about the Round Table Conferences which were intended to reunite the Liberal party. . . . From Chamberlain I heard that his view was to bring about a *modus vivendi* only, under which the Conservative Government was to be turned out on some side-issue. Mr. Gladstone would become Prime Minister for the fourth time, if the Irish would consent to take Local Government and a Land Bill first, and to leave Home Rule over. He thought that Mr. Gladstone was not unwilling, but that there would be difficulty in getting the Irish to consent. Morley and Harcourt were, according to Chamberlain, friendly to his suggestions, and Hartington hostile, not trusting Mr. Gladstone.'

On January 15th, 1887, Sir Charles wrote to Mr. Chesson* that

'Chamberlain and Morley were both going to make conciliatory speeches, but that nothing had really been done at Harcourt's house, every difficulty having been "reserved." There could be no doubt that several of the five who were there meeting were anxious to keep things

* See note, p. 273.

open, on the chance of Mr. Gladstone not remaining in sufficiently good health to continue to lead the party. The independent Liberals were vexed at the Conferences. Willy Bright called on me, and said that obviously the great difficulty of the moment was "to keep Mr. Gladstone in the Gladstonian party." Morley, who also called on me, casually observed, "Harcourt was never a Home Ruler. The only Home Rulers in the last Cabinet were Lord Granville and Spencer, in addition to myself and Mr. Gladstone." When we remember the views of Spencer in May, 1885, his violent Home Rule, which dates from July, 1885, is laughable.'

'On the 15th I had a long and curious conversation with Chamberlain about the matter. He said that the articles which had been appearing in the *Birmingham Post* about his own position were inspired by him—that he and the other members of the Conference were telling the newspapers that everything was going on swimmingly, but that the whole thing was in reality a sham on both sides. Parnell was frightened at Mr. Gladstone's declining health, and Mr. Gladstone did not wish to end his life by having smashed his party, so that the Conference was willingly continued, although it was doing nothing. It was the wish of all concerned in it to be at the point of an apparent reconciliation whenever Mr. Gladstone might become incapacitated, but he, Chamberlain, was firmly decided not to take office under Mr. Gladstone.

'Chamberlain said that Randolph Churchill on the previous night had asked him, "Shall I come over?" but that he, Chamberlain, had replied that he advised him not to, being afraid that Randolph would play for the lead of the party, and not liking the notion of having him for leader. He had advised Randolph to simulate moderation towards Lord Salisbury, in spite of his anger at the Duke of Norfolk and the members of the Conservative party who, since his quarrel with the Government, had been "attacking his private character."'

'On February 4th, 1887, Chamberlain again came to see me, and I noted in my diary that he was "very sore against Labouchere and others."

'On February 13th, Morley called and said that the Round Table Conference was hopeless, although they were to meet at dinner on the 14th, and once again after that. He said, "Both sides are very cross, and each side asks, 'What is to become of the other?'"

'On the same day Chance, M.P., told me, he being the attorney of the Nationalist party, that O'Shea was going forward with his divorce case against Parnell, and that Parnell had no defence possible. I have never known what was the reason of the immense delays which afterwards occurred.'

Parties now began to settle into their new groupings.

'On March 2nd, 1887, Chamberlain came to lunch, and told me a good deal about the failure of the Round Table Conference, but it was not till April 3rd that he told me the whole story. On this latter day Deakin, the Chief Secretary of Victoria, and most interesting of Colonists, was with me; and Chamberlain came in before Deakin had gone, and, talking with his customary frankness, discussed the whole matter before the astonished Victorian. There had been a sad split caused by a letter which he had written, and which he admitted was an indiscreet one, to the *Baptist*, as to Welsh Disestablishment. A hint was then let fall that the Gladstonians were going to negotiate with Hartington direct. On this Chamberlain went off to Hartington and got from him a letter to say that Hartington would not negotiate himself, but that Chamberlain was in possession of his views. Efforts were then made to get Chamberlain to meet Mr. Gladstone. Chamberlain agreed to do so, but not to ask for the meeting. At length a meeting was fixed at Mr. Gladstone's request for the morrow, Monday, April 4th. It was settled that at this Mr. Gladstone would ask what Chamberlain had to propose. Chamberlain was going to reply that Mr. Gladstone knew his views, and to then ask whether they were accepted, and he knew perfectly that nothing would come of it. He had on the same day, April 3rd, met Randolph at Mrs. Jeune's at lunch. They had walked away together, when Randolph had proposed a Chamberlain-Hartington-Randolph league against both parties. This had tempted Chamberlain, but was an idle suggestion, as Hartington and Randolph could never work together.'

In the autumn of 1887 Sir Charles and Lady Dilke went to Constantinople, and he writes :

'I had received at this time a letter from James, in which he said that Mr. Gladstone had sent for him to talk to him about me in the friendliest way, and, Mr. Gladstone having

called, I wrote to him, and transmitted some messages from the Sultan, in the following letter:

"ATHENS,
"*October* 14*th*.

'"I have never thanked you except verbally through James for a kind and pleasant message which I had from you by James and Chamberlain last session.

'"At Constantinople last Friday, and again to Lady Dilke last Monday, the Sultan said that he wished complimentary messages conveyed to you. The Greek Patriarch said the same thing to us on Tuesday and Wednesday. My wife told both that she hardly knew you, and I replied that I was unlikely to see you for some time, but would see that the messages reached you.

'"The Greeks on the one hand, and the Bulgarians on the other, are now very friendly with the Sultan, but I regret to find that the dislike between the Greeks and the Bulgarians is as strong as ever. The common preference of both for the Sultan over Russia has not sufficed to draw them together. The split between the Bulgarian Government and the Exarch of Bulgaria will, however, probably draw Bulgaria closer to the Phanar."'

Mr. Gladstone replied, on October 24th, that his message to Sir Charles expressed his real feeling, which he should have been glad to find other modes of expressing. He added that if the Sultan spoke sincerely in the message which Sir Charles transmitted,

"he must be acting as a good Christian: for Hobart Pasha when here, as a spy on Fehmi, told me the Sultan believed I was his greatest enemy. I have never been so great an enemy to him as he to himself. I have never had extreme views about Turkey. Had I the settling of the affair, I should be disposed to keep the Turks in Constantinople, and not to let Home Rule when freely and honestly given mean total severance. But the materials of convulsion are, I fear, slowly gathering in that quarter, and Russia, shut out from her just claim to the passage of the Straits, means to have the mastery of them. I always grieve over the feud of Hellene and Slav, out of which much mischief may come. The situation here is favourable to those who view the Irish Question as you do. The relations with Chamberlain have been rather painful. I think he has developed since the schism of March, 1886, even greater speaking and debating

talents than he had shown before. I think also that the organization of dissentient Liberalism, in which he has borne so large a part, has been enormously favourable to his general creed as an advanced Radical, whereas Hartington with his weak-kneed men has been utterly hoodwinked, and hoodwinked by himself. On the other hand, I own myself amazed at Chamberlain's proceedings during the last month. Everyone took a favourable view of his accepting the American mission;* but a man of one-tenth of his talent ought to have seen the folly of widening breaches and exasperating all passions as a preliminary to charging himself with a business that eminently requires a serene atmosphere.

"We witnessed at Nottingham an enthusiasm literally the greatest I have ever seen."

'On my return to England before the middle of November, 1887, I received a letter from the Cinderford Liberal Association, in the Forest of Dean, in which they referred to an attempt which had been made to induce me to stand for the Forest of Dean when Blake retired in July, 1887, and went on to press me to go there to speak. . . . . After the completion of the army articles and of the book, I intended to set to work on a new version of my *Greater Britain*. This afterwards became the book published under the title of *Problems of Greater Britain*.'

On October 28th, 1887, 'Chamberlain wrote . . . "Mr. Gladstone's last speech shows distinct signs of old age. I think matters cannot long remain in their present state, and the whole policy of England—both foreign and domestic—may be greatly altered."'

On reaching Washington, Chamberlain wrote: "I do not find the 'civilized world' so much pro-Irish as Mr. Gladstone would have us believe. On the contrary, I have as yet only met two Americans who have expressed themselves favourable to Mr. Gladstone's policy. They are, generally speaking, inclined to some concession in the direction of State rights, but they are entirely opposed to anything in the nature of a self-governing colony, and they have no personal liking for the Irish. Above all, they are horrified at Mr. Gladstone's recent utterances about law and order, and say openly that he must have lost his head."

* Mr. Chamberlain was corresponding with Sir Charles in regard to his mission, for which he started on October 29th, 1887. It had for its object the negotiation of a treaty with America on several outstanding questions.

'On January 4th, 1888, I made a speech in which I laid down my position as regarded Parliamentary candidature. It was made in presiding at the first dinner of the Hammersmith Central Liberal Club. About the same time I received requests to stand as candidate for Merthyr and for the northern division of the borough of West Ham, which I declined, pointing to my Hammersmith speech without giving further reasons.'

'About this time, my son being now at Rugby, we went down to see him and lunched with the Percivals.'

In the new session of 1888 Mr. Ritchie introduced his Local Government Bill, which (as Sir Charles had predicted to the Chelsea electors in 1885) was much influenced by the Liberal scheme that lay accessible in an official pigeonhole. The outline given by the new President of the Local Government Board in introducing the measure showed, however, that it fell short of expectation, and Sir Charles immediately criticized the project in an evening paper without waiting for publication of the text. When the Bill was published, he issued notes upon it, in concert with Mr. Cobb, M.P. for the Rugby Division, condemning the absence of any attempt to "reform and revivify the parish."

'My main objection to Mr. Ritchie's scheme was that, whereas in my scheme the District Councils had been more highly organized than the County Councils, in his scheme the reverse was the case.* There was no building up out of the smaller districts, giving the work as far as possible to the smallest, where the people were at their homes; but Mr. Ritchie's unit was the county, and the smaller bodies were neglected.

'The Liberal leaders took a short-sighted course in recommending their friends to allow the Bill to pass almost without discussion.'†

* The allusion is here, apparently, to the Bill which Mr. Chamberlain prepared in 1886, but with considerable help from Sir Charles.

† In 1892 he again notes his intervention on this question. 'On November 9th, 1892, I had a long interview at the Local Government Board with Henry Fowler, the President, at his request, before I went down to the Chelsea Board of Guardians for the last time. He consulted me as to all his Bills, especially as to that on Local Government.'

There were, however, friends who considered that the new institutions established by Mr. Ritchie's Act opened a way back into public life for Sir Charles. Among these was Mr. Chamberlain. He was, as usual, corresponding with Sir Charles, during his absence abroad, on all matters, and an interesting letter is noted here.

'In, I think, May, 1888, while we were at Royat, I received a letter from Chamberlain in which he indicated a change in his views upon the South Africa question. Ultimately he completely turned round from his old position, which was violently anti-Dutch, and, like everyone else, fell into line upon the principle of the fusion of race interests in South Africa.'

'On our return Chamberlain came down to Dockett and spent the afternoon, bringing Austen with him, and very strongly urged that the time had now come when I should stand for Parliament. I said that I thought that the time would come, but that, after India, I had *Problems of Greater Britain* to write before I thought about it. He then urged that I should stand for the County Council in my absence in India, and as to this point a great difference of opinion arose, I being inclined to accept his advice, which was also very strongly pressed upon me by my former colleague Firth; my wife and G. W. Osborn strongly took the opposite view, to which I yielded. I afterwards came to think it had been the right view. Chamberlain pressed his opinion very hotly to the last. I received a deputation from Fulham which represented the entire Liberal and a portion of the Conservative party, and the seat would certainly have been won; but I declined, and Chamberlain then wrote: "You must be the judge, and are probably the best one. But I yield reluctantly."'

This decision was made public in answer to the Fulham deputation just before Sir Charles started on a journey to India.

In February, 1889, after his return to England, he was confronted with a new proposal. The Progressive party now in power on the London County Council desired to put him forward as one of the first Aldermen. Sir Charles refused; but a preliminary circular in reference to his candidature had been issued, and a protest was immediately

organized by the section which desired his permanent ostracism. This opposition was then formidable in its proportions, and it never wholly disappeared. It was, however, increasingly clear that a much stronger body of public opinion desired his return to public and Parliamentary life.

In March, 1889, he was elected Honorary President of the Liberal Four Hundred in the Forest of Dean. The election did not pass without challenge, and one of the objectors was the Rector of Newent (Canon Wood). Sir Charles sent this clergyman the papers in the divorce case, which had been collected by Mr. Chesson* and his associates, and a study of them turned the Rector of Newent into a strong supporter of the man whom he had at first denounced.

Dilke's first visit to the Forest of Dean took place in May, 1889. By this time it was clear that his absence from Parliament could be terminated at his own pleasure. Mr. Gladstone had intervened almost officially in the matter. In June, 1889, he again sent for Sir Henry James, who transmitted the purport of his talk: which was that, while Mr. Gladstone was most anxious to see Sir Charles back, his opinion was that steps should not be too quickly taken. Sir Henry thought that Mr. Gladstone would willingly give his opinion and advice if Sir Charles thought that would be of any value to him. A few weeks later Mr. Gladstone called at 76, Sloane Street, but missed Sir Charles.

'In August he wrote to me in regard to his correspondence with James. The most important passage in the letter was:

'"I deeply feel the loss we sustain in your absence from public life, after you had given such varied and conclusive

* Mr. Chesson had died earlier in this year; and the token of Sir Charles Dilke's gratitude to this defender of unpopular causes is commemorated in the High-Altar of Holy Trinity Church, Upper Chelsea, which he presented in memory of his friend. Sir Charles wrote: 'He had been for many years a useful man in politics, and he was to me at this period a very precious friend; one of the best and truest men I ever knew; he had been the most helpful man in England to the anti-slavery cause of the Northern Abolitionists, the working man of the Jamaica Committee, and, many years afterwards, of the Eastern Question Association, and of the Greek Committee; and since his death no one has taken his place.'

proof of high capacity to serve your country; and I have almost taken it for granted that with the end of this Parliament, after anything approaching the usual full term, the ostracism could die a kind of natural death. And I heartily wish and hope that you may have lying before you a happy period of public usefulness.'' '

Sir Charles was in no hurry. Another invitation had reached him, from Dundee, and 'on November 4th a unanimous request to contest the borough of Fulham.'

But his determination was to let nothing interrupt the work on his book; after that, various promises both of writing and speaking had to be redeemed.

Meanwhile he remained in touch with the political world. 'I carried on a controversy with Labouchere about his views in favour of reforming the House of Lords, to which I was bitterly opposed, preferring, if we could not get rid of it, to go on as we are.' All Labouchere's letters were full of references to the position of Chamberlain, and Chamberlain himself came from time to time to discuss that point.

'On December 2nd, 1889, I saw Chamberlain. On October 10th he had told me that he was clear that ultimately he should join the Conservatives, unless Mr. Gladstone were soon to go and a Rosebery-Harcourt combination would come to terms with him about Ulster. On December 2nd I found a little change back from his general attitude, and in face of the probable break-up of the Parnellite party over the O'Shea case, which was beginning to be talked of in detail, Chamberlain was undecided, he said, and no doubt thought, between the two parties. But I noted in my diary: "Labouchere sets him against the Liberals, and Balfour attracts him to the Tories." It was clear that I thought that the change was but a temporary one, and that he was certain to return to his attitude of October, as in fact he did.'

Problems of Greater Britain appeared at the end of January, 1890, and within a month the edition was exhausted. In America, Sir Charles, expecting censure, had arranged to reply in the *North American Review* to his censors; but there was so little adverse comment that he chose another subject.

Discussion of military problems abounded in the book, but the "Problems" treated were by no means only those which concerned military experts. Mr. Deakin wrote:

"It will not merely be the one book treating authoritatively of the Empire, and the one book making it known to Britons in Europe, but it will also be the first book enabling the various groups of colonies to understand each other, and their individual relation to the whole of which they form a part. . . . Knowing some of the difficulties you encountered . . . I have been completely amazed at the skill or the intuition with which you have caught the right tone of local colours and the true tendency of our political and social life."

'On July 23rd, 1890, I lunched with McArthur* to meet Schnadhorst, who had returned from South Africa, and who warmly pressed my standing at the General Election, and I allowed myself to be persuaded so far as to promise that I would consider the matter in connection with the offer of any first-rate seat.'

Different constituencies were mentioned; but in the following October, when it became known that the then member for the Forest of Dean would not stand again, Mr. Schnadhorst wrote at once to Sir Charles urging him to let his name be put forward. He added, as an indication of the general feeling, that the adjacent constituency of South Monmouthshire had also sent in a request for Sir Charles's services—"which should assure you that popular support will overwhelm any other influence." Accordingly, at the end of this year Sir Charles saw a deputation of leading men from the Forest, and fixed a date on which he would give a reply to a formal invitation. Having spent Christmas in his house at Toulon, he returned thence in February, 1891, met a further deputation, and agreed to give his public reply in the Forest in March.

In December, 1890, Chamberlain had concurred in the decision that, before Dilke accepted any candidature, there

* Mr. W. A. McArthur, Liberal Whip and member of Parliament, who had made Sir Charles's acquaintance in 1886, and become a warm personal friend.

should be published a digest of the case with annotation and with the new evidence, 'which had grown up out of Chesson's notes, and which was largely the work of Howel Thomas, Clarence Smith, Steavenson, and McArthur. This was published in February, 1891, on my return.'*

'The Cinderford meeting (the central town of the Forest) on March 9th, 1891, was unanimous, and after it we remained chiefly in the Forest of Dean for a long time. I had promised to give my final reply in June. At the meeting of March I had only stated that if, after all the attacks which might be made upon me, they should remain in the same mind, I would accept.'

Sir Charles was fortunate in his new constituency. Throughout England there was no other so suited to him; he desired contact with large bodies of labouring men, and the Forest made him a representative of that great and typical British Labour group, the miners. He loved "each simple joy the country yields," and, whereas almost everywhere else a mining district is scarred, defaced, and blackened, here pit-shafts were sunk into glades as beautiful as any park could show, forest stretches of oak and beech enveloped that ugliness in green and gold, and from many a rising ground you might look over the broad vale where the wide Severn sweeps round a horseshoe curve and the little, unspoilt town of Newnham stands set in beauty, winter or summer.

Newnham was dear to Sir Charles, and there he stayed for visits in winter. But the place of his most frequent and prolonged abode in his constituency was the Speech House, built in the very heart of the woodland, remote from any town, yet at a centre of the communal life; for outside it, on a wide space of sward, the Forest miners held

* In 1886 he had written: 'In the course of this winter a committee of friends of mine, got together by Chesson, and containing Steavenson (afterwards Judge Steavenson), and Howel Thomas of the Local Government Board, but also containing W. A. McArthur, M.P., Clarence Smith, ex-Sheriff of London and Middlesex, afterwards M.P., and Canon MacColl, who were mere acquaintances, or less, had begun to investigate my case with a view of getting further evidence.'

their yearly meeting, their "speech-day." The miners' interest, which he represented, was not of recent growth, nor arising out of some great enterprise of capital; it linked itself with those rights of commonage of which he had always been a chief champion, and appealed not only to the radical but to the antiquarian in him. The "free miners'" privileges marked only one of many ancient customs in that Crown domain which he studied and guarded.

As in 1867 and 1868 he had made it his business to be sure that the electors whose votes he sought should know his opinions, so far as possible, not on one subject, but on all, so now in 1891, at his meetings throughout the constituency, he unfolded the whole of his political faith.

He developed in speech after speech the views which he had put forward in *A Radical Programme*, published in 1890, and in a great speech at Glasgow on March 11th of that year. His views on Housing, as given in his Glasgow speech and afterwards dealt with in his Forest campaign, show how far he was in advance of the recommendations made in the Report of the Royal Commission on Housing of the Poor.

'As chairman of that Commission, I had to instruct the secretary working with myself to draw such a report as would at least obtain a majority upon the Commission, and we succeeded in drawing a report that obtained a unanimity of votes; but, of course, to do so we had to put forward the points in which we felt that many would concur, and to keep out our most extreme suggestions. I personally would go much farther, and would allow towns to build or hire or buy, and would encourage them to solve the problem for themselves, and not ask the State to help them, except by setting free their hands and allowing them to obtain land cheaply and to tax themselves freely for the purpose. . . . Gladly would I see towns armed with the powers to destroy, without compensation, in extreme cases, filthy dwellings, where it is proved to the satisfaction of the magistrates that the owners are in fault, and the sites of such dwellings might be obtained by a cheap process. In all cases we ought to give powers to public bodies to take land for public purposes at a fair

price . . . and by the adoption of the principle of betterment . . . owners would be called upon to make special contribution towards schemes which would improve their property at large.'

He dwelt on the sufferings of the working classes owing to improvements which ejected them from their dwellings, and urged that the Local Authority should in all cases come to terms as to rehousing before granting any facilities for improvements.

For land he advocated taxation of unearned increment and fixity of tenure under fair rents fixed by judicial courts, with power to the community to buy up land at its real price.

He also advocated, not only the limitation of hours of work, a principle to which he had been converted by the Industrial Remuneration Conference of 1885, but that the workers should be qualified for the enjoyment of their leisure by educational opportunities. He urged the example of Switzerland in making education compulsory up to sixteen years of age, and that of Ontario in granting free education up to the age of twenty-one.

He advocated municipal Socialism, by giving to municipalities the widest possible power to deal with local needs, and, passing from local expenditure to that of the State, he dealt with the need for graduation of Imperial taxation, and urged the equalization of the death duties (as between real and personal estate) and making these duties progressive. He would raise them gradually to 25 per cent. By such means we should attain the double purpose of raising money and discouraging the possession of large estates, which are the cause of the existence of a too numerous idle class.

Adult suffrage and one man or woman, one vote, was always a part of his programme.

In his utterances the change from individualism to collectivism is marked. "We were all Tory anarchists once," he used to say in reviewing economic theories of the sixties, and the change which had come over the attitude of economists to social questions. His own conversion was so

thorough that in industrial questions he acted often as a pioneer, and his constituency adopted his views on the limitation of hours by legislation as in the demand for a legal eight-hour day.*

He had laid it down as a condition of acceptance of the candidature for the Forest that there must be 'full and absolute belief' in him and in his word. Time was given for the personal attack to develop, and it was made by pamphlet propaganda with unsparing virulence, but entirely without result. Not a dozen Liberals in the division declared themselves affected by it; and 'on June 11th, 1891, I gave my consent to stand for Parliament at a meeting held at Lydney, which was extraordinarily successful and unanimous.'

The chair was taken by Mr. Thomas Blake, who had been member for the division, and who in the darkest hour of Sir Charles's political life had come forward with a proposal to resign and make way for him. He was there now to say that, if Sir Charles would stand, he himself would act as unpaid election agent. On the platform were all the leading Liberals of the Forest, among them Canon Wood of Newent, whose opposition had been turned into strenuous advocacy. There also was "Mabon" to speak for himself and the Welsh miners, and from the outside world Mr. Reginald McKenna, an inseparable friend. Sir Charles's speech, which he counted to have been the best of his life, dealt briefly with the leading political topics of the day—Home Rule and the Radical programme—but soon passed to the personal issue. He recalled the change from the murky dreariness of March to the height of summer loveliness which reigned about them, and the change no less great in the moral atmosphere. He reviewed the history of the attacks that had been made, the avowed determination to prevent his being their member; and at the close he declared himself satisfied that their trust was fully his. "My conditions have been fulfilled. I accept

* Speeches in Forest of Dean and elsewhere (1890-1891). *Radical Programme*, 1890.

the confidence you have reposed in me. I trust that strength may be given to me to justify that confidence, and I reply—not for a day, nor for a year, but from this day forward, for better for worse; and thereto I plight my troth. To-morrow we go forth from among you and commit our honour to your charge."

He was justified in the confidence which he reposed in them. One attempt was made to raise the personal issue against him; and its result showed that any man would be imprudent who sought to oppose Sir Charles Dilke in the Forest of Dean except on strictly political grounds. First and last no member of Parliament ever got more loyal support; but no man ever trusted less to personal popularity. He carefully developed the whole electoral machinery. The month which he spent every autumn in the Forest was very largely a month of work on the detail of registration, and the register as he caused it to be kept might be put forward as an example of perfection unapproached elsewhere in Great Britain.

'A day or two afterwards I received at a public meeting at Chelsea Town Hall an address signed by 11,000 inhabitants of Chelsea, congratulating me on my return to public life. It was signed by persons on both sides of politics. In reply, I made another good speech; but it was a great occasion.'

Among the letters which reached him from all quarters was one from Sir Henry Parkes, who wrote:

"CHIEF SECRETARY, NEW SOUTH WALES,
"SYDNEY, *March 9th*, 1891.

"I still hold the belief that few men have before them a broader path of honourable usefulness than you. May you succeed in nobly serving the dear old country!"

He received now and henceforward many invitations to address labouring men, especially from the miners of Great Britain.

At Cannock Chase, in August, 1890, he attended his first miners' meeting. How rapidly the list increased may be judged by the fact that, speaking in July, 1891, at Ilkeston,

he alluded to his conferences with miners of Yorkshire, of Lancashire, of Cheshire, Somerset, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire, Staffordshire, and the Swansea and Neath districts in England and Wales, and of Fife and Ayrshire in Scotland. Attempts had not been wanting to stimulate against him the strong puritanism of these people, especially in South Wales; the answer had come from men like Tom Ellis,* who brought him to address the quarrymen of Blaenau Festiniog, or like Mabon—William Abraham—miner, bard, and orator, who organized a gigantic torchlight procession of his own constituents in the Rhondda Valley to welcome Sir Charles and Lady Dilke, and who, at Lydney, when Sir Charles finally accepted their invitation, congratulated the Forest of Dean on having secured the services of "one who was not only a political leader, but a real Labour leader." Parliamentary action in favour of an Eight Hours Bill formed the burden of Sir Charles's discourse at all these meetings. Accepting a special invitation to the annual conference of miners in the beginning of 1892, he dealt with the proposal, then strongly advocated, of a general international strike, pointing out that this measure "should not be even talked about until they had seen the exhaustion of all other means of obtaining what they wanted." It meant civil war; would "disorganize the whole economic condition of the country and the trade of the Empire, and produce also a great feeling of exasperation between classes." He pressed them to consider whether, in the event of such an international conflict, the whole brunt would not fall on Great Britain. In Belgium and in France there was no such strength of organization as among them; and a general strike succeeding in Great Britain, but failing on the Continent, would be a national danger. He proposed, as an alternative, co-operation with the British representatives of other trades, for whom also Parliamentary interference was demanded. In the discussion which followed, the weight of his argument was fully recognized, and a resolution favouring the interna-

* Mr. Thomas E. Ellis was a Liberal Whip at this time.

tional strike was amended into one calling for Parliamentary action.

In the following June Sir Charles Dilke attended the Miners' International Congress, and spoke at the banquet given to foreign delegates. A month later, when the General Election came on, "thousands of handbills and posters," says Mr. Thomas Ashton, "were sent to the Forest of Dean by our federation recommending the workers to vote for the working man's candidate."

Nor were his public utterances on Labour questions limited to Great Britain; request came from a society of the Belgian economists for a lecture on some subject connected with Greater Britain, and he chose the Australian strike and the position of Labour in the Colonies. This discourse was delivered by Sir Charles in Brussels on his way back from France at the beginning of 1891, and he then, he says, 'made the acquaintance of all the leading people on both sides in that city.'

As early as May, 1891, Dilke had made up his mind (and stated it in a letter to Count Herbert Bismarck) that the Liberal party would win the next election. The question of the Leadership was raised at the end of the session in a letter from Chamberlain:

"I am told that Mr. Gladstone is much shaken by his late illness, and I cannot see how he can ever lead the House again, though his name will always be a tower of strength in the constituencies."

But in December Mr. Chamberlain said that he did not think the prospects of a General Election were so good for Mr. Gladstone as they had been six months ago.

'James, dining at my house, had said a long time before this that the prospects of the Liberals might look rosy, but that they had not realized the extent to which the Liberal Unionists intended to spend their money upon Labour candidates;' and this danger 'began to show itself more clearly about this time.' On December 28th 'I had an amusing letter from Cyril Flower:

'"Surely for a real good muddle in political affairs, Welsh, Irish, Scotch, and English, there has never been a

bigger, and what with Parnellites and anti-Parnellites (Christian and anti-Christian) Whigs, Labour candidates, Radicals, Tories, Jacobites, and Liberal Unionists, the next House will be as rum a kettle of fish as ever stewed since George III. The worst of it is, as the House gets more and more divided (like the French Chambers) into sets, it also becomes more and more incapable of getting through its business, and the littleness of the individual members becomes daily more apparent."'

The real difficulty for the Liberals was, however, the question of leadership; and Sir Charles wrote an article in the *Speaker** in support of one of his few paradoxes —that Great Britain would be better off without a Second Chamber, but that, given a House of Lords, the Prime Minister should be a member of it. For this reason he urged that though, '"when the moment has come for Mr. Gladstone to think that he has earned a change into the position of adviser from that of military chief, Sir William Harcourt will occupy the place he pleases to assume—he will be able to make himself Prime Minister if he chooses" —yet "the party would be strongest with Mr. Gladstone for adviser, Sir William Harcourt, as fighting chief, sharing the responsibility with the leader in the Lords more fully than he would if he were Prime Minister in the Lower House"'; and he named Lord Spencer as possible Prime Minister, since Lord Rosebery should be Foreign Secretary, and the Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister should not be the same man, "so heavy is the work of each of these two offices."

With the opening of 1892 Parliament entered on its sixth, and last, session, and 'on April 1st I received a letter from Chamberlain, in which he said:

'"My own firm conviction is that parties will be nearly divided, and if Mr. G. has a majority nothing will be done either in regard to Ireland or to social questions in Great Britain.

'"I do not *expect* the election till late in the autumn, and, judging from appearances, the Opposition are much

* September 5th, 1891.

divided and rather depressed in spirit. My prediction is that, unless the Gladstonians give up the idea of a separate Parliament (I do not say extended local government), they will not obtain power—though they may obtain office—for this generation.

'"This is a bold prophecy for you, but it is my sincere opinion."'

Right essentially—for there was a very small Liberal majority—Mr. Chamberlain was wrong on the point of date: the election came in July, 1892.

In the Forest proper, the local war-chant, "Yaller for iver, an' Blue in the river!" was shouted everywhere. But the constituency, 'a microcosm of England, industrial and agricultural,' as Sir Charles had called it, had districts where support of the 'working man's candidate' could only be whispered; where closed hands were furtively opened to show a marigold clasped in them; where perhaps, as a farmer's trap drove by carrying voters to the poll, the voters, outwardly blue-ribboned, would open their coats a little and show where the yellow was pinned. Lady Dilke on polling-day took charge of these districts. Yellow flowers from every garden were heaped into her carriage as she passed; and when votes came to be counted, more than one had been spoilt by too enthusiastic votaries who wrote across their paper, "For Lady Dilke." Her courage and devotion had touched the loyalty of the Forest people, and she received from them a tribute of genuine love. One who accompanied her tells of a later day when, after a terrible mine accident, Lady Dilke came down to visit the homes on which that blow had fallen. In one a young widow sat staring dry-eyed at the fire or turning tearless looks on the child that played near her. But when Lady Dilke entered, the woman rose from her chair, and, running to her visitor, put her arms about her neck, and as the two held each other, tears came at last.

Sir Charles Dilke was returned by a majority of two to one, and, he writes laconically, 'in August was well received in the House of Commons.'

In 1891 Sir Charles had expressed some surprise at hostile comment in the *Times* and other important organs on his selection as candidate for the Forest of Dean, and Mr. Chamberlain told him candidly that opinion in society and in the House itself was hostile to his candidature, and that he must look forward to a 'mauvais quart d'heure.' But it was otherwise. After his election there appears to have been a general expectation that he would be silent, and keep out of the range of hostile criticism. As a fact, he fell directly into his old habit of raising every subject which interested him. Parliament met again on January 31st, 1893, and as soon as notice of questions could be given, Sir Charles was reviving interest in a subject familiar to him of old, by asking the new Liberal Government to issue papers which had been omitted from the official publications of France and Great Britain, but had been published in the Madagascar Red Book.

Amongst congratulations on his election came one from the Prime Minister at Antananarivo, rejoicing that the threatened freedom of Madagascar would again have his support, and transmitting the Red Book just named. Within the first week of the session Sir Charles had questioned Government about the arbitration as to the Newfoundland fisheries; and concerning a vacancy in the Bombay command, with inquiry as to whether amalgamation of the Indian armies would be considered*—a change which he had long advocated. He also reappeared in a different field, but one familiar to him, by introducing a Bill to amend the system of voting in local elections. Then, on February 11th, while the Address to the Crown was still under discussion, he took part in a full-dress debate.

Mr. James Lowther, the leading Protectionist of days when Protection was not a fashionable creed, proposed an amendment seeking to restrict the immigration of destitute aliens; and he found a seconder in a trade-unionist, Mr.

* The amalgamation of the Indian armies was achieved by abolition, in 1894, of the separate military commands of the Presidencies.

Havelock Wilson, who spoke for the seamen. After Mr. Gladstone had argued strongly against the proposal, but had shown his perception of the widespread support which it received by expressing willingness to appoint a committee of inquiry, Sir Charles Dilke rose, and, claiming to speak for a small minority, opposed legislation and committee alike.

The force of his appeal to the House lay in the description which he gave of persecution directed against the Jews in Russia, coupled with citation of many previous instances in which England had afforded asylum, and had gained both advantage and respect by so doing. First-hand knowledge of Russian conditions and detailed mastery of the historical case were combined in what one of the more important speakers for the motion (Sir William Marriott) called a "magnificent speech"; and Sir Charles himself observes that it turned many votes. Mr. Mundella wrote to him after the debate: "I think it was the best I ever heard from you, and, moreover, was courageous and just."

Mr. Mundella was no doubt struck by the fact that a man coming in, as Sir Charles did, specially dependent on the support of organized Labour, had in his first speech combated the view of Labour interests which was put forward by trade-unionists. Sir Charles's reply to the trade-unionists ran thus: If these aliens come to England, they very often join trade-unions, and so accept the higher standard; if they do not, the products of their work come in and compete even more disastrously. From this there lay an argument against Free Trade, and this he characteristically admitted. Free Trade was only a balance of advantages, and Labour politicians, he pointed out, considered that the arguments against it were outweighed by countervailing considerations. To exclude the immigrants and not to exclude the products of their labour would be inconsistent, and also it would lower the nation's standard of humanity.

Early in the session he spoke again on the qualifications for membership of local elective bodies, and incidentally condemned the proposed Ministry of Labour as "a sham

remedy."* Not to create new Ministries, but to reorganize and redistribute their work, was his policy, advocated repeatedly both in the House of Commons and from the chair of the Statistical Society. He spoke also on redistribution in this session, and these speeches were 'successful in their business way. Thus I regained influence of a quiet sort.'

'For the first time' (1893) 'I dined at the Speaker's third dinner, or "dinner of the discontented." The first dinner each year is to the Government, the second to the late Government, and the third to the Privy Councillors who were not of either of the others, and to a few other leading members. Little Northcote was on the Speaker's left, parted only by the Speaker from Randolph. I was opposite, reflecting, whenever Jim Lowther would leave off slapping me on the back.'

On January 29th, 1893, Sir Charles noted in his diary:

'There is a league between Harcourt and Labouchere against the Rosebery-Asquith combination. Labouchere showed me a letter from Harcourt: "Hell would be pleasant compared to the present situation."'

'On my return to the House of Commons,' notes Sir Charles, 'I found Chamberlain's debating power marvellous, but, while his method has improved, it . . . no longer carries the conviction of conviction with it, which, to me, is everything.

'Asquith is the only new man who is "any good"—a bold, strong man, of great intellectual power. Sir E. Grey is able, but terribly Whiggish. Hanbury has improved, and so has Harcourt. The others are where they were.'

Mr. Asquith he had met for the first time in 1891, at Mr. Chamberlain's house, and found him "much more intelligent than the ordinary run of politicians."

Dilke and Chamberlain, once closely united through a long period of public life, had now been working apart for more than seven years. Strong minds, that in the collaboration of their earlier policy mutually influenced each other, had by a turn of personal fortune combining with a great political change followed divided destinies;

* See "Labour," Chapter LII., pp. 347, 348.

and their evolution carried them far apart. They had met in private, had maintained the personal bond,* and in so meeting must inevitably have been prompted by a desire to minimize differences. But now they stood both again in the public arena—the one returning after the lapse of years, the other sustained by an unbroken continuance of Parliamentary activity—and the situation became difficult.

There were not many men who could work with Mr. Chamberlain in equal alliance. For that a man was needed, confident enough in his own weight not to fear being overbalanced in the combination; great enough in nature to be devoid of jealousy; and wise enough to understand that restless activity was the law of his ally's being. Upon those conditions only was it possible for a cooler, more temperate, and, on some subjects, better instructed politician to steer the tremendous motive power which Mr. Chamberlain's personal force afforded. What was lost to the world when the crippling of Sir Charles disjointed that alliance can never be reckoned. Not only the alliance, but the personal intimacy, was broken when their political ways sundered on the Home Rule division. Friendship remained; but it was not possible that men of that mark, who had met incessantly in the closest confederacy, could meet easily when the very groundwork of their intimacy was gone.

Sir Charles worked hard for a Bill specially interesting now to his constituents.

On April 18th, 1893, 'I wrote to Chamberlain and to Randolph Churchill as to the Miners Bill, as its authors had asked me to lay plans for the debate. From both I had replies favourable to local option, and on my writing again to Chamberlain he answered: "The sentence about the Labour leaders escaped me because I am, I confess, impatient of their extremely unpractical policy, and also because I believe their real influence is immensely exaggerated. A political leader having genuine sympathy with the

* 'At this time I was searching for a secretary, and Chamberlain found me Hudson, who, as he said, "fulfils all your requirements."' The connection between the secretary and his chief ended only with Sir Charles's death.

working classes and a practical programme could, in my opinion, afford to set them aside. Mr. Gladstone has no real sympathy with the working classes, and a perfect hatred for all forms of Socialism. His concessions are extorted from him, and are the price paid for votes, and therefore I do not wonder at the pressure put upon him.'' '

In the first week in May, 1893, 'I brought forward my Egypt motion, spoke for the Miners Bill, and carried a resolution, drawn for us by the Lord Chancellor himself, as to the appointment of the magistrates for counties. From this time forward I shall not name my speeches and ordinary action in the House, as I had now regained the position which I had held in it up to 1878, though not my position of 1878-1880, nor that of 1884-85.'

No Parliament is exactly like its predecessor, and changed conditions had also changed the character of Sir Charles Dilke's Parliamentary personal surroundings; but they were drawn now, as of old, from neither party exclusively. The group comprised several young supporters of the Government, like Mr. McKenna, who, having failed in Clapham, wrote to Sir Charles on July 7th, 1892, of his regret at not being near him in the House of Commons "to go on learning from you—I don't mean information, but patience and judgment and steadfastness." Mr. McKenna had now been returned for South Monmouthshire, one of the constituencies which had been anxious to secure Sir Charles himself. Here Sir Charles had many devoted friends, who gave introductions to Mr. McKenna, which led to his adoption as candidate, and he wrote again to Sir Charles on his election: "I am glad to owe it to you." Old friends—as, for example, Mr. Morley—remained, and from the ranks of the Opposition at least one rarely interesting figure stands out, that of H. O. Arnold-Forster, who with Mrs. Arnold-Forster came to rank among the nearest friends of Sir Charles and Lady Dilke. The political tie was here due to common advocacy of army reform, and it took shape in a kind of formal alliance.

'In November, 1893, in the debates on the Local Government Bill, I carried a good deal of weight, and was able

greatly to improve the measure. I also in December made a speech in a naval debate which was as successful as my Zulu speech—with as little reason, except its opportuneness.'

In the Home Rule portion of the session of 1893, Sir Charles was mostly silent, being, in his own words, inclined to "keep still" on the main issue. His only contributions to the long debates were made during the Committee stage, and concerned the electoral arrangements —a matter upon which Mr. Gladstone was quick to acknowledge his high competence. When at last, in 1894, the Bill reached the Lords, it was rejected; and then the foreseen change of leadership came to pass, and Lord Rosebery was 'popped into Mr. Gladstone's place by an intrigue.' Sir Charles discussed in the *North American Review* the result, which his Memoir describes thus. Admitting that the choice, which 'came as a surprise to the Liberal party in the country,' would strengthen the Government in Scotland and in London by Lord Rosebery's personal prestige, he none the less foresaw that the new leader would come into conflict 'with all that is active in the Liberal party,' unless he could renounce 'his personal wishes in favour of a reformed but a strong and indeed strengthened Second Chamber.' His chance of success lay in putting himself as a peer at the head of a movement against the veto of the House of Lords. 'The chance is before him, but he is a cautious Scotchman who seldom makes up his mind too soon, and who may possibly make it up too late.'

Meanwhile 'I was pressed to join Labouchere and Storey in opposing him, which I declined to do, on the ground that I was concerned with the measures proposed, but not with the men.'

Speaking in the Potteries on November 22nd, 'to a big audience which took it well,' he 'attacked Rosebery about the Lords.'

'He would like to see Lord Rosebery in the popular House in which he had never sat, and he would like to see Lord Salisbury back again. Their ideas would undergo a change. The reform of the Upper House was now not a

Liberal but a Conservative nostrum. . . . It would be necessary for the Radicals to fight even against their Liberal leaders to prevent lengthening the life of the Parliamentary sick man. . . . The Liberal party was still hampered by men who wanted peerages for themselves and their sons, and he should not believe that the leaders were in earnest until the Liberal party gave over making peers. Moderate men must be warned by the example of what had recently happened in Belgium, where the moderate Liberals had been promptly suffocated between the two opposing forces of Toryism and Socialism, as they were too pretentious to submit to Tory discipline and too slavish to become frankly democratic.'

CHAPTER L

INDIA AND FRANCE—RHODES AND BISMARCK
1886–1892

I.

In the period covered by the earlier portion of the previous chapter, Sir Charles Dilke had used his freedom as an opportunity for travel.

'During a visit to Paris, in the winter of 1886, paid in order to discuss the question of the work which ultimately appeared in France as *L'Europe en 1887*, I saw a good deal of Castelar, who was visiting Paris at the same time; and it was to us that he made a speech, which has become famous, about Boulanger, who was beginning to attract great notice, declaring in French, "I know that General Boulanger—he is a Spanish General;" meaning that the Spanish habit of the military insurrection under the leadership of a showy General was extending to France.*

'Chamberlain, during his journey abroad, had seen a good deal of Sir William White, the Ambassador at Constantinople, who wrote to me about him: "We became friends, and spoke naturally of you, our mutual friend. I could not help seeing Chamberlain's immense quickness of observation and talents. In foreign politics he appeared to me to be beginning his ABC, but disposed to learn. . . ." The Ambassador went on to say that the intimacy between France and Russia was coming to the front at Constantinople, and that Bismarck's Ambassador did not seem to take umbrage at it.

'In September, 1887, we went to France, where our journey had nothing of great interest, except a visit to Vaux-

* In 1889 Sir Charles notes: 'My wife and I were asked to dinner to meet General Boulanger; and I decided that I would not go, neither did she.'

le-Vicomte, Fouquet's house,* which remains very much as Fouquet left it, although the gardens in which he received Louis XIV. in the great fête recounted by Dumas have been completed by their present proprietor, with whom we stayed. We afterwards visited Constantinople, and stayed for ten days at Therapia, and then at Athens, where I had a great reception, as indeed throughout Greece, on account of my previous services to the Greek cause; in some cases payment was refused on this ground.† Our journey to Turkey and Greece was full of interest. The Sultan showed us immense courtesy. Greece after twenty-five years seemed to me as lovely as ever. The Eastern Church were very civil to us, and the reception at the Phanar at Constantinople by the Œcumenical Patriarch, the Archbishop of Constantinople, Dionysius V., in Synod was striking. I wrote from Constantinople to Chesson: "The Bulgarians and the Greeks are both now on excellent terms with the Turks, although, unfortunately, they still detest one another. The Sultan does not care two straws about Bulgaria now, and will do nothing in the matter except mark time. The Greek Patriarch gave us an official reception, with some Archbishops present, who represented the Churches of Asia and of the Islands, and showed us their splendid Byzantine treasures. It is extraordinarily interesting to see all the effects of St. Chrysostom; but I cannot help feeling that the Church sold the Empire to the Turks, and would have been more estimable had it *lost* its jewels. The last Constantine tried to reunite the Eastern and Western Churches, and the poor

* Near Melun, in the Seine-et-Marne, where Fouquet gave the celebrated fête referred to. See *Mémoires de Fouquet*, by A. Chéruel, vol. ii., chap. xxxv.

† A letter from Lady Dilke of October 29th, 1887, written to Cardinal Manning, a constant correspondent, deals with one of these episodes:

"We were received at the Piræus by an order not to open our boxes, an ignorant underling being severely rebuked, and bid to 'look at the name on the boxes. Would you ask money from one who has done so much for Greece?' In short, we had a royal reception. The Prime Minister, the Metropolitan, and the other Ministers and their families, and all dignitaries, ecclesiastical, academical, political, military, all vied in showing Charles honour. The crowd watched outside for a glimpse of him, and M. Ralli, when I said how touched he was at their faithful gratitude, said: 'It is not only our gratitude we wish to show him. You have no idea of the intense sympathy felt for him in Athens.' We had but three days to give, and so missed the great public banquet and the torchlight procession which the students wished to organize. At Corinth the King and Queen were equally kind."

man was denounced as a heretic, and surrounded only by Latins when he was killed on the breach. The Church, however, went through a small martyrdom later on, and was glorified by suffering at the beginning of the Greek War of Independence, when the then Patriarch was hanged by the Turks and dragged about for three days by the Jews. They all seem on very good terms now, and the Patriarch sang the praises of the present Sultan loudly. The Sultan has been very civil. I did not want to see him, which doubtless made him the more anxious to see me. He sent for me twice, and, besides the audience at the Selamlik, had us to a state dinner given in our honour at the Haremlik. I refused the Grand Cordon of the Médjidieh, but Emilia accepted the Grand Cordon of the Chefkat for herself. He is very anxious to make a good impression, and is having the *Shrine of Death* done into Turk!"

'I received a letter of thanks from the Secretary of the Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery for having obtained for them from the Sultan a copy of the portrait of Nelson which is in the Treasury at Constantinople; but what I really tried to obtain was the original, inasmuch as no one ever sees it where it is.'

Sir Charles Dilke, writing to Mr. Chamberlain an amused account of the Sultan's advances, says: "Lady White told Emilia that she heard I was to be Grand Vizier."

II.

'My riding tour along the Baluch and Afghan frontiers was,' Sir Charles notes, 'one of the pleasantest and most interesting experiences of my life.'* Leaving England in October, 1888, he landed with Lady Dilke at Karachi in November. They were met by the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Frederick Roberts, and went on over the broad-gauge line, then not officially open, through the Bolan Pass to Quetta. "When we reached the picturesque portion of the pass, we left our carriages for an open truck placed at the

* He adds, "I described so fully in the *Fortnightly Review*, in two articles of March 1st and April 1st, 1889, my riding tour . . . that I shall say no more about it." This account of the journey is summarized from those articles, the criticism on military questions being dealt with by Mr. Spenser Wilkinson in the chapter on Defence (LV.).

head of the train, in front of two engines, and there we sat with the fore part of the truck occupied by the paws and head of His Excellency's dog; next came the one lady of the party and Sir Frederick Roberts, and then myself and all the staff. The long-haired warriors and tribesmen, who occupied every point of vantage on the crags, doubtless thought, and have since told their tribesmen on their return, that the whole scene was devised to do honour to a dog."

They were travelling over part of "the great strategic railroad constructed after the Penjdeh incident, on orders given by the Government of which I was a member."

At Quetta he was among the guests of Sir Robert Sandeman, Agent for British Baluchistan, ruler in all but name of those nominally independent frontier principalities and clans. "Quetta conversations soon brought back reminiscences of far-off days. When I had last seen Sir Robert Sandeman it had been in London, during the discussion of the occupation of the Khojak position, in which I sided with him. . . . We brought with us or found gathered here all the men who best understood the problem of frontier defence —a very grave problem, too."

The party assembled under the roof of the Residency included the Commander-in-Chief, of whom Sir Charles says: "Sir Frederick Roberts knows India as no one else knows it, and knows the Indian Army as no one else has ever known it"; the Adjutant-General; the Quartermaster-General, who was Director of Military Intelligence; the Military Member of Council, General Chesney; and Sir Charles Elliott, the Member of Council for Public Works, who had charge of the strategic railways. With them were the Inspectors-General of Artillery and of Military Works, the Secretary of the Defence Commission, and the General in Command at Quetta, as well as his predecessor, who had not yet vacated the post.

He saw manœuvres outside Quetta in the valleys that lead from the Afghan side, and he had the experience of riding up and down those stony hill slopes beside the Commander-in-Chief. He explored the Khojak tunnel, then under pro-

cess of construction, running through "a wall-like range which reminds one of the solitude of Sainte-Baume in Provence," surveyed all the defences of Quetta, and then, while Lady Dilke went on by rail to Simla, he set out to ride, in company with Sir Frederick Roberts and Sir Robert Sandeman, from Harnai, through the Bori and Zhob Valleys, towards the Gomul Pass. On that journey he saw great gatherings of chiefs and tribesmen come in to meet and salute the representatives of British rule. He watched Sir Robert Sandeman parleying with the borderers, and was introduced to them as the statesman who had sanctioned the new road. These were regions beyond the reach of telegraph, where outposts maintained communications by a pigeon post, of which the mountain hawk took heavy toll; and each day's journey was a hard and heavy ride.

The ride continued for twelve days, through scorching sun by day and bitter cold at night; and every march brought its full portion of strange and beautiful sights. All the romance of border rule, outposts among robber tribes, order maintained through the agency of subsidized chiefs, were disclosed; and even when the conditions of travel changed, when a train took them from the Upper Indus to Nowshera and Peshawur, it brought to Sir Charles the opportunity of seeing what interested him no less than the wild tribal levies —namely, the pick of British regulars in India, both native and European.

The splendour and beauty of the pageant pleased the eye, and there was not lacking a dramatic interest. He had seen by Sir Frederick Roberts's side the mountain battle-ground where the day of Maiwand was avenged and British prestige restored; now he was present when Ayub Khan, the victor of Maiwand, voluntarily came forward to hold speech for the first time with the conqueror who so swiftly blotted out the Afghan's victory.

'On our way back (from India) we stayed at Cairo, and saw much of Sir Evelyn Baring, Riaz, Mustapha Fehmy,

the Khedive, Tigrane, Yakoub Artin, and the other leading men. At Rome, as we passed through Italy, I made the acquaintance of many of my wife's friends, the most interesting of whom was, perhaps, Madame Minghetti, known to her friends as Donna Laura, and previously Princess Camporeale; and I obtained through Bonghi, whom we saw both at Naples and at Rome, an order to see Spezia—an order which was refused by the War Office, and granted by the Admiralty. The Admiral commanding the Fleet and the Préfet Maritime were both very kind, and I thoroughly saw the arsenal, fleet, and forts, with the two Admirals.'

In 1905 Sir Charles writes:

'On September 7th in the year 1891 I started for the French manœuvres, to which I had been invited by Galliffet. By sending over my horses I was able to see the manœuvres extremely well. . . .

'The Marquis de Galliffet was an interesting figure, a soldier of the time of Louis XV., who, however, had thoroughly learned his modern work. There were 125,000 men in the field, but, looking back to my adventures, I am now more struck by the strange future of the friends I made than by the interest, great as it was, of the tactics. We had on the staff almost all those who afterwards became leading men in the Dreyfus case, on both sides of that affair. Saussier, the Generalissimo, had with him, to look after the foreign officers, Colonel (afterwards Sir) Reginald Talbot, Huehne' (German Military Attaché), 'and others—Maurice Weil (the Jew friend of Esterhazy), who was in the Rennes trial named by the defence as the real spy, though, I am convinced, innocent. We now know, of course, that Esterhazy should have been the villain of the play. . . . General Billot, afterwards Minister of War, was present, living with Saussier, as a spectator. Galliffet had under him nearly 120,000 men, but the skeleton enemy was commanded by General Boisdeffre, afterwards Chief of the Staff, and the leader of the clerical party in the Ministry of War, and friend, throughout the "affair," of Billot. General Brault, also afterwards Chief of the Staff, was in the manœuvres Chief of the Staff to Galliffet. He, it will be remembered, also played his part in the "affair," as did Huehne, named above. On Galliffet's staff, besides General Brault, were Colonel Bailloud, also concerned in the Dreyfus case; Captain Picquart, afterwards the youngest

Lieutenant-Colonel in the French army, a brilliant and most thoughtful military scholar, the hero of the Dreyfus case in its later aspects; the Comte d'Alsace, afterwards a deputy, and, although a clerical Conservative, a witness for Dreyfus; and Joseph Reinach, the real author of the virtual rehabilitation of Dreyfus. It was a singularly brilliant staff. Bailloud, it may be remembered, afterwards became Commander-in-Chief of the China Expedition.

'Of those who have not been named, in addition to the remarkable men who figured in the Dreyfus case, and among the few on this staff who were not concerned in it, were other interesting persons: the Prince d'Hénin, M. de la Guiche, and a man who was interesting, and figures largely in memoirs, Galliffet's bosom friend, the Marquis du Lau d'Allemans. "Old Du Lau," as he is generally called, was a rich *bon vivant*, with a big house in Paris, who throughout life has been a sort of perpetual "providence" to Galliffet, going with him everywhere, even to the Courts where Galliffet was a favourite guest. Reinach and Du Lau were not soldiers in the strict sense of the term, although members of Galliffet's staff. Maurice Weil, though a great military writer, was himself not a soldier, although on Saussier's headquarters staff in Paris and in the field. Weil and Reinach were both officers of the territorial army: Weil a Colonel of artillery, Reinach a Lieutenant of Chasseurs à Cheval. Du Lau was a dragoon Lieutenant of stupendous age—possibly an ex-Lieutenant, with the right to wear his uniform when out as a volunteer on service. I was walking with him one day in a village, when a small boy passing said to a companion "What a jolly old chap for a Lieutenant!" And it was strange indeed to see the long white hair of the old Marquis streaming from beneath his helmet. He was older, I think, than Galliffet, who was retiring, and who received during these manœuvres the plain military medal, which is the joy of French hall-porters, but the highest distinction which can be conferred by the Republic on a General who is a member of the Supreme Council of War and at the top of the tree in the Legion of Honour. Joseph Reinach was, of course, young enough to be the son of old Du Lau, but since leaving the regular regiment of Chasseurs—in which he had done his service at Nancy, while Gyp (his future enemy and that of his race) was the reigning Nancy beauty—he had expanded in figure so that his sky-blue-and-silver and fine horse did not save him from comments by the children

who had noted Du Lau's age. The Duc d'Aumale was also present on horseback as a spectator, but his official friends, and their friends, were forced to ignore him, as he had not yet made his peace with the Republic.

'As soon as I had joined Galliffet, I wrote to my wife: "Conduct of troops most orderly. It is now, of course, here, as it was already in 1870 with the Germans, that, the soldier being Guy Boys* and Jim Haslett and all of us, and not a class apart, there is no 'military tone.' Discipline, nevertheless, seems perfect, but are the officers as good as the non-commissioned officers and the men? I doubt. Promotion from the ranks combined with special promotion to the highest ranks for birth of all nobles who have any brains at all is a combination which gives results inferior to either the Swiss democratic plan or the Prussian aristocratic. Perhaps a fifth of the officers are noble, but more than half the powerful officers are noble; and here we are with the sides commanded by the Prince d'Eckmühl and the Prince de Sartigues." (During the first days of the manœuvres the four army corps and the two cavalry divisions were combined under Galliffet; half the army was commanded by General Davoust, who, of course, is the first of these two Princes; and Galliffet had for "second title" the name of his Provençal principality near Marseilles.) "You may say, 'The Generalissimo, sausage-maker, restores the balance.' But the real Generalissimo is Miribel, Aristo of the Aristos—for he is a poor noble of the South. Another of the army corps is commanded by a Breton, Kerhuel, and the other by a man of army descent for ever and ever, Négrier, son and nephew of Napoleonic Generals."'

'An amusing billet adventure was named in another letter to my wife:

'"I am in a Legitimist château: one side of the room, Callots; the other, Comte de Chambord. Over the bed a large crucifix. The room belongs to 'Mathilde.' But as I live with the staff I do not see the family. The butler is charming, and the fat coachman turned out two of *his* horses to make room for 'Madame' and 'W'f'd'r.' I had to write a letter to a French newspaper, which had charged me with turning my back on the standard of a regiment instead of

* Guy Boys was Lady Dilke's nephew; Jim Haslett the ferryman at Dockett. Sir Charles was illustrating the fact that all classes serve together both in the ranks and as officers.

bowing to it, and dated from this place: 'Château de Boussencourt.'" '

His observations were summed up in an article for the *Fortnightly*, which was later 'translated into French by an officer on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, and, after appearing in a review, was published separately by the military library.' His strictures on the handling of the cavalry led to a controversy in France into which he was obliged later to enter.

'As I passed through Paris on my return, Galliffet wrote: "You are as a writer full of kindness, but very dangerous as an observer, and next time I shall certainly put you on the treatment of the military attachés—plenty of dinners, plenty of close carriages, plenty of gendarmes, no information, and a total privation of field-glasses. This will be a change for you, especially in the matter of dinners. Lady Dilke cannot have forgiven me for sending you back in such wretched condition." '

M. Joseph Reinach wrote in 1911:

"Nous recommandions tous deux le rajeunissement des cadres. Il s'est trouvé enfin un ministre de la guerre, M. le général Brun, pour aborder résolument le problème. Comme nos souvenirs revenaient fréquemment aux belles journées de ces manœuvres de l'Est! Je revois encore Dilke chevauchant avec nous dans l'état-major de Galliffet. Il y avait là le général Brault, le général Darras, le général Zurlinden, le 'commandant' Picquart, Thierry d'Alsace, le marquis Du Lau. . . . Ah! la 'bataille' de Margerie-Haucourt, sous le grand soleil qui, dissipant les nuages de la matinée, fit scintiller tout à coup comme une moisson d'acier les milliers de fusils des armées réunies! Comme c'est loin! Que de tombeaux! . . . Mais nous sommes bien encore quelques-uns à avoir gardé intactes nos âmes d'alors!"*

* An article in the *Figaro* written after Sir Charles Dilke's death.

III.

It was in 1889 that Sir Charles Dilke came into touch with Cecil Rhodes during a visit paid by the latter to England.

'In July, 1889, I saw a good deal of Cecil Rhodes, who was brought to my house by Sir Charles Mills,* and afterwards came back several times. He was at this moment interesting, full of life and vigour, but when he returned to England after the British South Africa Company had been started he seemed to have become half torpid and at the same time dogmatic. The simplicity which had distinguished him up to the end of his visit of 1889 seemed to have disappeared when he came back in 1891; and his avowed intention of ultimately coming to England to take part in English politics seemed also a strange mistake, as he was essentially a man fitted for colonial life, and had none of the knowledge, or the mode of concealing want of knowledge, one or other of which is required for English public work.'

'In August, 1889, I received a note from Rhodes from Lisbon which constitutes, I believe, a valuable autograph, for his friends all say he "never writes." I had asked him to clear up an extraordinary passage in one of Kruger's speeches (on which I afterwards commented in *Problems of Greater Britain*), and Rhodes wrote:

'"The fates were unpropitious to my day on the river, as matters required me in South Africa, from which place I propose to send you the famous speech you want. I quite see the importance, if true, of his utterance, but I can hardly think Kruger would have said it. I hope you will still hold to your intention of visiting the Cape, and I can only say I will do all I can to assist you in seeing those parts with which I am connected. I am afraid Matabeleland will be in too chaotic a state to share in your visit, but between the diamonds and the gold there is a good extent to travel over. I am doubtful about your getting Kruger's speech before you publish, but it will be the first thing I will attend to on my arrival at the Cape. Kindly remember me to Lady Dilke.

'"Yours truly,

'"C. J. Rhodes."

'At the beginning of November, 1889, I heard again from Rhodes, who wrote from Kimberley:

* Then Agent-General for the Cape and a great personal friend.

'"DEAR SIR CHARLES DILKE,

'"I have come to the conclusion that Kruger never made use of the expression attributed to him, as I can find no trace of it in the reports of his speech on the Second Chamber. I send you a copy of the draft law. . . .

'"Thanks for your news of Bismarck's map. Their true boundary is the 20th degree of longitude, and it will take them all their time to retain even that, as the Damaras are entirely opposed to them, and the German company which nominally holds that territory will soon have to liquidate for lack of funds. It is one thing to paint a map, and it is quite another to really occupy and govern a new territory. I am still waiting for the news of the signature of the charter, which I hope will not be much longer delayed. I think Kruger will find his hands quite full enough without interfering with me. He is still trying to get them to give him Swaziland in return for non-interference in Matabeleland. The Matabele King (Lobengula) still continues to slaughter his subjects, and makes the minds of our representatives at times very uncomfortable. It is undoubtedly a difficult problem to solve; but the plain fact remains that a savage chief with about 8,000 warriors is not going to keep out the huge wave of white men now moving north, and so I feel it will come all right.

'"Yours,

'"C. J. RHODES."

'In March, 1890, I received a letter from Rhodes from the Kimberley Club, in which, after giving some facts with regard to the state of South Africa, he went on: "I see that Home Rule is gaining ground.* It really means the American Constitution. It is rather a big change, and the doubt is whether the conservative nature of the English people will face it when they understand what Home Rule means. Schnadhorst is here, but is still suffering very acutely from rheumatism."'

The reference to "Bismarck's map" in the second of these communications shows that Sir Charles had reported to Rhodes some of the observations made by the Chancellor in the course of the visit of which an account here follows.

'In September, 1889, having settled to take my son to Germany to a gymnasium, and having told Herbert Bismarck

* Rhodes had given Mr. Parnell a subscription of £10,000.

my intention when he was in London, I was asked by him in his father's name to stay at Friedrichsruh with the Prince. I started for Germany with my son at the same moment at which my wife started for the Trades Congress at Dundee.'

He wrote to M. Joseph Reinach in August, 1889: "I'm going to Friedrichsruh the week after next to stay with Prince Bismarck, who seems very anxious to see me—about colonial matters, I think. I will tell you what he says, for your private information, if he talks of anything else, which is not, however, likely, as he knows my views about that Alsace question which lies at the root of all others. But I had sooner my going there was not mentioned in advance, and I shall not be there until September 7th—9th."

'Herbert Bismarck wrote: "I hope you will accept my father's invitation, because he is anxious to make your personal acquaintance. I am greatly disappointed that I shall be deprived of the pleasure of introducing you myself to my father, owing to my absence, but, then, I am sure that you will find yourself at your ease in Friedrichsruh, whether I am there or not. Hoping to see you before long in England, believe me,

'"Very truly yours,

'"H. Bismarck."

'The son was still called Count von Bismarck by himself, and popularly Herbert Bismarck, but shortly afterwards his father gave him the family castle of Schoenhausen, and from that time forward he used on his cards the name of Graf Bismarck-Schoenhausen. When I got to Ratzeburg, where I left my son, I found a telegram from Friedrichsruh: "Prince Bismarck looks forward to your visit to-morrow with great pleasure"; and then it went on to tell me about trains.

'I was met at the station by Prince Bismarck's official secretary—Rottenburg of the Foreign Office—with an open carriage, although the house was formerly the railway hotel (Frascati) and adjoins the station. I wrote to my wife on Saturday, September 7th: "The great man has been very sweet to me, though he is in pain from his sinews. We had an hour's walk before lunch together. Then Hatzfeldt, the Ambassador in London, came, and all the afternoon we have been driving, and went to the harvest-home, where the Bismarck grandchildren danced with the peasants on the grass. The daughter, and mother of these children, does the honours, and is the only lady; and at dinner we shall be the Prince, Hatzfeldt, self, Countess von Rantzau, Count von Rantzau, Rottenburg the secretary, a tutor and another secretary, the

two last 'dumb persons.' The forest is a Pyrford of 25,000 acres, but the house is in the situation of a Dockett, and must be damp in winter till the great January frost sets in, when the Baltic is hard frozen." '

Sir Charles notes upon this: 'Hatzfeldt was the Chancellor's right-hand man—of action. But Bismarck did not consult him: he said, "Do," and Hatzfeldt did.'

The letter continues:

'"When Bismarck's Reichshund died, a successor was appointed, but the Emperor, who had heard of the death and not of the appointment to fill the vacancy, gave another, and the Prince says: 'Courtier as I am, I sent away my dog to my head-forester's and kept the gift one, but as I do not like him I leave him at Berlin.' Here the favourite reigns, and her name is Rebekkah, and she answers very prettily to the name of Bex. The old gentleman is dear in his polite ways. . . . The daughter is equally pleasant, and the son-in-law as well. We were loudly cheered at the harvest festival, of course. . . . You can write to our friend J. R. [Reinach] of the R.F. [*République Française*] that I found the Chancellor very determined on peace as long as he lives, which he fears will not be long, and afraid of Prussian action after his death."

'In another letter the next day, Sunday, September 8th, 1889, I wrote: "I expected the extreme simplicity of life. The coachman alone wears livery, and that only a plain blue with ordinary black trousers and ordinary black hat—no cockades and no stripes. There are only two indoor men-servants: a groom of the chambers, and one other not in livery—the one shown in the photograph of Bismarck receiving the Emperor, but there, for this occasion only, dressed in a state livery.* The family all drink beer at lunch, and offer the thinnest of thin Mosel. Bismarck has never put on a swallow-tail coat but once, which he says was in 1835, and which is of peculiar shape. A tall hat he does not possess, and he proscribes tall hats and evening dress among his guests. His view is that a Court and an army should be in uniform, but that when people are not on duty at Court or in war, or preparation for war, they should wear a comfortable dress, and each man that form of dress that he finds most agreeable

* Photographs which Bismarck gave Sir Charles, showing the Chancellor with his hound receiving the young Kaiser, and Bismarck alone with his dog, always hung on the wall at Dockett.

BISMARCK.

From a photograph.

To face p. 304, Vol. II.

to himself, provided that it be not that which he calls evening dress and tall hats—a sort of 'sham uniform.' Countess von Rantzau, however, dresses in a high, short evening gown like other people. The Prince eats nothing at all except young partridges and salt-herring, and the result is that the cookery is feeble, though for game-eaters there is no hardship. The table groans with red-deer venison, ham, grouse, woodcock, and the inevitable partridges—roast, boiled, with white sauce, cold, pickled in vinegar. A French cook would hang himself. There is no sweet at dinner except fruit, stewed German fashion with the game. Trout, which the family themselves replace by raw salt-herring, and game, form the whole dinner. Of wines and beer they drink at dinner a most extraordinary mixture, but as the wine is all the gift of Emperors and merchant princes it is good. The cellar card was handed to the Prince with the fish, and, after consultation with me, and with Hatzfeldt, we started on sweet champagne, not suggested by me, followed by Bordeaux, followed by still Mosel, followed by Johannesberg (which I did suggest), followed by black beer, followed by corn brandy. When I reached the Johannesberg I stopped, and went on with that only, so that I got a second bottle drawn for dessert. When the Chancellor got to his row of great pipes, standing against the wall ready stuffed for him, we went back to black beer. The railway-station is in the garden, and the expresses shake the house."

'Other points which struck me in the manners and customs of Friedrichsruh were that the Chancellor invariably took a barrel of beer out driving, and stopped halfway in the afternoon and insisted on his guests consuming it out of a two-handled mug which appeared from under the coachman's seat. I had some talk with him about the wisdom of his going unprotected for great distances through the woods, and he answered, 'But I am not unprotected,' and showed me a pistol which he carried, but, of course, a man with a blunderbuss behind a tree might easily have killed him. He never takes a servant on the box by the side of the coachman, and generally drives entirely alone. He rides alone without a groom, and walks alone with only his dog, or rather the forester's dog, the daughter of the Reichshund, who walks six or seven miles every morning to go out with him, and six or seven miles every night to come to dinner.

'The Prince was evidently discontented with the Emperor, but wholly unable to believe that he himself could be done without. He told me that he must work each day and could

never take a holiday, but that even a few minutes' work was sufficient, as all that was necessary was that he should keep an eye on what was going on. All was now so well arranged that the only thing which gave him trouble was the internal condition of Alsace, which as a Reichsland had him alone as a Minister. In the evening he chatted much about the past; told me of his visit to London in 1842, of how a cabman tried to cheat him, and how at last he held out all his money in his hand and said to the man, "Pay yourself"; how then the man took less than that which he had refused, his right fare, and then with every sign of scorn ejaculated, "What I say is, God damn all Frenchmen!" Bismarck speaks admirable English, with hardly any trace of accent, but spoken very slowly. French he speaks more rapidly but less well; and of Russian he has a fair knowledge. He told me how (also in 1842) he had visited Barclay and Perkins's, and had been offered an enormous tankard of their strongest ale. "Thinking of my country, I drank it slowly to the last drop, and then left them, courteously I hope; I got as far as London Bridge, and there I sat down in a recess, and for hours the bridge went round." He told me how he had striven to keep the peace through the time of Napoleon III., but finding it useless had prepared for war; and he made no secret of the fact that he had brought the war about. He told me himself, in so many words, that at the last moment he had made war by cutting down a telegram from the King of Prussia, as I have said above;* "the alteration of the telegram from one of two hundred words to one of twenty words" had "made it into a trumpet blast"—as Moltke and Von Roon, who were with him at dinner when it came, had said—"a trumpet blast which" had "roused all Germany." As he mellowed with his pipes he told me that, though he was a high Tory, he had come to see the ills of absolutism, which, to work, required the King to be an angel. "Now," he said, "Kings, even when good, have women round them, who, even if Queens, govern them to their personal ends." It was very plain that he was on bad terms with the Emperor, and equally clear that he did not believe that the Emperor would dare dismiss him.'

A commentary on the last sentence follows at no long interval, when *Problems of Greater Britain* appeared and 'Herbert Bismarck, in thanking me for a copy of my book, said: "My father . . . sends you his kindest regards. He is just going to disentangle himself from the Prussian ad-

* See Chapter XI. (Vol. I., p. 157).

ministration altogether, and will resign the post as Prime Minister, so that he will only remain Chancellor of the Empire." This was on February 10th, 1890, and before long Bismarck had been still further "disentangled," not by his own act,' but by a blow almost as sudden and dramatic as that which, in 1661, had struck down the owner of Vaux.*

'In a second letter that young Bismarck wrote, he thanked me for sending him the famous sketch from *Punch* (Tenniel's cartoon) of the captain of the ship sending away the pilot. He wrote:

'"MY DEAR DILKE,

'"I thank you very much for your kind note, which warmed my heart, and for the sketch you have cut out of *Punch*. It is indeed a fine one, and my father, to whom I showed it yesterday when your letter reached me, was pleased with its acuteness, as well as with the kind messages you sent him and which he requites. He has left last night for good, and I follow to-night to Friedrichsruh. It was a rather melancholy historical event, when my father stepped out of the house in which he has lived for the benefit of my country for nearly twenty-eight years. When I wrote you last, my father thought only of leaving the offices he held in Prussia, but things went on so rapidly that he did not see his way to remain as Chancellor in Berlin after the Emperor had let him know that His Majesty wished him to resign. I had no choice what course to take after he had been dismissed. My health is so much shaken that I am not able to take upon my shoulders alone the tremendous amount of responsibility for the foreign affairs of Germany which hitherto fell upon my father. When we drove to the station yesterday, our carriage was almost upset by the enthusiastic crowd of many thousand people who thronged the streets and cheered him on his passage in a deafening way; but it was satisfactory for my father to see that there are people left who regret his departure. I shall come back to Berlin after April 1st to clear my house and to pack my things, and then I shall stay with my father till the end of April. In May I hope to come to England, and I look forward to the pleasure of seeing you then.

'"Believe me,

'"Ever yours sincerely,

'"H. BISMARCK."

* See the *Mémoires de Fouquet*, by A. Chéruel, vol. ii., chap. xxxviii.

'He dined with me on May 15th, 1890, when Arnold Morley, Borthwick, Jeune, Fitzmaurice, Harry Lawson, and others, came to meet him; and from this time forward he came frequently to England.'

Sir Charles, while meeting the younger man thus often, never again had sight or speech of the old Chancellor. 'In Christmas week [1892] I had a general invitation from Prince Bismarck to stay with him again at Friedrichsruh. But the chance never came.' Immediately on his return from Germany Sir Charles wrote to his friend Reinach:

"PYRFORD BY MAYBURY,
"NEAR WOKING,
"*September* 13*th*, 1889.

"MY DEAR REINACH,

"Bismarck c'est la paix. As long as he lives, which he thinks will not be long, he expects no movement. He agrees with me that the first movement will come from Russia. He expects the Republic to last in France. Bleichröder tells him that Ferry is the one man of energy and power.

"Yours,
"CHS. W. D."

Three weeks later, in answer to a question by M. Reinach, this is added:

"Health as good as he says. But he does *not* say that. He says he suffers very much. The fact is that he looks very much older than he is, and his hands look like ninety instead of seventy-four."

What Bismarck thought of his guest may be gathered from a saying quoted in public by Dr. Stephen Bauer. Baron Rottenburg, Bismarck's first secretary, had told him that, after Sir Charles's visit to Friedrichsruh, the Chancellor spoke of him as "the most interesting of living English statesmen."*

In spite of Bismarck's efforts to bring about another meeting, this visit was the only occasion on which the two men met. It was at a time when the great maker of United Germany was nearing his fall. He was becoming the bitter

* At the banquet given to Sir Charles Dilke in April, 1910.

adversary of the Kaiser and of his policy, a policy which he foresaw might imperil "the strength and glory of the German Empire." In the often-quoted words of his instructions to diplomatic representatives abroad—"Do all in your power to keep up good relationship with the English. You need not even use a secret cipher in cabling. We have nothing to conceal from the English, for it would be the greatest possible folly to antagonize England"—is to be found one main point of Bismarck's diplomacy; and feeling thus, he welcomed a conference with the English statesman of that generation whom he had looked upon as certain to be a force in the approaching years. When at last the meeting took place, Dilke had been overtaken by circumstances which altered his political position in England. But neither Bismarck nor any other statesman on the Continent anticipated that they could possibly have the result of excluding permanently from office one of the very few English statesmen whose names carried weight with foreign Powers on military and international politics.

CHAPTER LI

PERSONAL LIFE—IN OPPOSITION

1895 TO 1904

FEW members of the House of Commons can have been sorry to see the last of the Parliament which ended in June, 1895; and Sir Charles had nothing to regret in its disappearance. In respect of foreign affairs, he saw little to choose between the Liberal and Tory Ministers except that, of the two, Lord Salisbury was 'the less wildly Jingo.' On questions of Imperial Defence many of his old friends in the Liberal Government were arrayed against him; and with matters standing as they stood between the two Houses, there was no hope of any important Labour legislation. Lord Salisbury had again become Prime Minister, and under the new Conservative Administration everything went more easily. Sir Charles testified in one of his speeches that Mr. Balfour's leadership, "by his unfailing courtesy to all members, made the House of Commons a pleasant place"; and Mr. Balfour's leadership was well assured of several years' continuance.

A great Parliamentarian, Sir Charles nevertheless held no brief for Parliament. As a practical statesman, he realized the advantages in a strong hand of such a machine as Bismarck controlled; while his democratic instincts made him favour the Swiss methods, with direct intervention of the people through the Referendum.

"I trained a whole generation of professional politicians to respect the House of Commons," he said, "but I was never favourable to the Parliamentary, and I was even hostile to the Party, system."

Nevertheless, since England was wedded to its traditional system, to work this efficiently was the first duty of an English politician. A note from Sir Reginald Palgrave in 1893 acknowledges gratefully some criticisms of the tenth edition of the classical work which deals with this subject. No one was ever better qualified than Sir Charles to say what could or could not be done by the rules of order, and he would certainly have inculcated upon every politician the necessity of this knowledge as a practical equipment.

"What Dilke did," writes Mr. McKenna, "was to impress upon me the importance of a thorough understanding of the procedure and business of the House of Commons, a branch of knowledge in which he was an accomplished master."

Sir Charles's whole scheme of existence was arranged with reference to the work of Parliament. Of it he wrote on December 15th, 1905, in reply to Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, who had dwelt on the interest of county government:

"The development of character in politics and the human side of the House of Commons have an extraordinary dramatic interest for me, and an attraction so strong that Harcourt told me that, knowing it, he did not see how I could live out of the House of Commons. I managed to do so, but only by shutting it for a time absolutely out of my mind, as though it did not exist. Having the happiness of being able to interest myself in everything, I suppose I am born to be generally happy. You have known me so long and so closely that few men are more aware of the kind of suffering I have gone through, but the happiness of interest in life has rarely been wanting for long in me, and if it were, I should go out—not of Parliament—but of life." *

Sir Charles never left London while the House was sitting, except for the annual gathering of the Forest miners at the Speech House. On all other working days of the session he was to be found in the House of Commons. He held that the House offered the extremest form of interest or of boredom, according as a man did or did not follow closely all that was going on. For this reason,

* Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice was Chairman of the Wiltshire County Council. He had re-entered Parliament as M.P. for North Wilts in 1898.

the smoking-room, where most Parliamentary idling is transacted, saw little of him; cigars, of which he was a great consumer, were for periods of leisure, and he was at the House for business. He might be seen in the passages, going by with coat-tails streaming behind him, most often in the members' lobby on his way to the first corridor, where was his locker—marvellously stuffed with papers, yet kept in a methodical order that made it a general centre of reference for himself and his colleagues, who consulted him on all subjects; or sometimes in the library, with multifarious correspondence and documents outspread, snipping away with a pair of scissors, after his habit, all in them that was not vitally important.* Again, since one form of relaxation which he permitted himself was his afternoon cup—or cups, for they were many—of tea, the tea-room also offered a chance to those who sought him. But whoever wanted Sir Charles went first into the Chamber itself, and in five cases out of six would find him there alert in his corner seat below the gangway, primed and armed with documented information, and ready at any minute to interpose. Every day he went through the whole bewildering mass of papers from which members are presumed to instruct themselves concerning the business of the sittings and to keep a check upon the general proceedings of Government. In his case the presumption was realized. Probably no private member ever equalled him in demands for "papers to be laid," and certainly none was ever better able to justify his requests for additional information. If these requests were refused, it was never because he wanted what was superfluous, but that which, in his hands, might become inconveniently serviceable.

One habit of his may be traced to his hatred of wasting time. The instant a division was announced he was on his feet, hurrying so as to avoid long minutes of waiting in a crush; and it came to be regarded as part of the natural order that Sir Charles should be first through the lobby.

* Mr. Hudson tells how in February, 1911, after Sir Charles's death, he went down to clear his locker in the House of Commons, and found it empty. Mr. Hudson surmised that, foreseeing his need for it was over, Sir Charles had himself prepared it for his successor in its use.

With all this industry, the record of divisions so carefully chronicled by the hard-working M.P. was not of moment to him. If the business did not seem to him important, he had no objection to absent himself and dine at home. He was weatherwise in the assembly, and knew the conditions which might lead to unforeseen disturbance.

In questions raised by alteration of rules or standing orders, he was never averse from innovation, and even generally an advocate of change. But while the rules were there he insisted rigorously on their observance, in so far as they affected the larger interests of division or debate. Also he fulfilled punctiliously the prescribed courtesies, making it a usage to be down early and to secure his place, although no one ever thought of appropriating it. He rigidly observed the rule, transgressed by others, which prescribes the wearing of a tall hat by members in the House. The hat which was thus endeared to him by traditional usage is therefore inseparable from Parliamentary memory of him. He was generally to be seen handling a sheaf of papers more than Ministerial in dimensions; and he made his hat the receptacle for them; often it would be crammed to bursting before the speech had concluded. Yet there remained with him always the trace of his younger days of grave dandyism; he never abandoned the Parliamentary frock-coat, and sketches of him in the illustrated papers convey the austere correctness of its folds; and the hat from which so much service was exacted appeared each day unsurpassable in gloss.

The intricate mass of historical associations delighted his imagination at Westminster. He took pleasure in all the quaint survivals, from the long-transmitted ceremonial of the Speaker's entrance, the formal knockings of Black Rod, the cry of "Who goes home?" down to the still continued search before each session for some possible Guy Fawkes. Keenly alive to the past and to the present, he saw with special pleasure any happy grafting of a new usage on to that old stock of memories. Speaking in his constituency after the lying in state of King Edward, which he had attended (standing next to the Prime Minister as the senior Privy Councillor present), he welcomed the precedent which

gave a new association to Westminster Hall—that "epitome of English history." He recalled to his hearers the outstanding incidents and persons whose record had then come into his mind. His habit of tracing out links with the past made him at Westminster the best and most animated of guides.

So it was in Provence, in the Forest of Dean, on the road down from London to Surrey; so it was always in the neighbourhood of his Chelsea home.

There could be no such companion for a ramble through its streets. His memory, astounding in its recollections of his own time, held stories of older records; in his eager, vivid talk the past lived again. As we passed along Cheyne Walk, George Eliot held court in her house once more, while a few doors off Rossetti's servant pushed aside the litt'e grating to inspect his visitors before admission. Carlyle dwelt again in the house in Cheyne Row, with Whistler for his neighbour. Sir Charles would tell how earlier the Kingsley brothers lived with their father in the old rectory, and one at least of their novels was founded afterwards on the traditions of the place. Then, as layer after layer of history was lifted, Smollett wrote his novels or walked the Chelsea streets with John Wilkes; Sir Richard Steele and "his dear Prue" reinhabited their house, and Dr. Johnson worked at the furnaces in the cellars where Chelsea china was made.*

He would give, as a curious illustration of the way in which many years may be covered by a few generations, the fact that he himself had known intimately the daughter of Woodfall, printer of the *Letters of Junius;* while Wood-

* "Sir Charles Dilke, in hunting about for materials for his lecture on 'Old Chelsea' to-morrow, has made some very interesting discoveries. He has found that part of the building once occupied by the famous Chelsea china works, which was thought to have gone for ever, exists as part of a public-house with a modern frontage looking out on the Embankment. The cellars are in an admirable state of preservation. Another interesting point has been the exploration of the old Moravian cemetery, which is now completely enclosed by houses, the ironwork of the gate worn, and, as it were, eaten out by age. Here lie the bones of Count von Zinzendorf, one of the founders of the Moravian sect, and many other famous folk. This, again, has led to some interesting discoveries about Sir Thomas More, all of which will find a place in Wednesday's lecture" (Extract from *Leicester Daily Post*, January 11th, 1888, on lecture to be delivered in Town Hall, Chelsea).

fall's acquaintance included Smollett as a resident, and Pope as a visitor to Chelsea. He would talk long of Sir Thomas More,* "the first of Chelsea worthies," whose memory is loved and commemorated by every true inhabitant, and to whose voluntary poorhouse for the parish he pointed, as the direct progenitor of the Chelsea Benevolent Society and the Board of Guardians. But one episode in More's career specially fascinated him: it was when two great lives touched, and More, journeying to Calais, met that famous lady, Margaret of Austria, the first Governess of the Netherlands, and negotiated the treaty between the Emperor, England, and France, 1527. Great as was his respect for Sir Hans Sloane, after whom the street in which he lived was named, and who gave to Chelsea its beautiful Physic Garden, he never forgave him the destruction of More's house or the removal of its water gateway.

He would describe the tidal shore, as it lies in the picture which he bequeathed to the Chelsea Free Library, and which hangs on its staircase, when below the old church the bank sloped to the water's edge; or he would pass back to the earlier time when the boats of the nobles lay there in such numbers that Charles II. described the river as "Hyde Park upon the Thames." Once more Bess of Hardwick lived at Shrewsbury House, Princess Elizabeth sheltered under the Queen's Elm; at the old Swan in Swan Walk, Doggett founded the coat and badge to be rowed for by the watermen's apprentices "when the tide shall be full." These things may be found in many a guide-book and in the lectures

* He writes: 'On December 18th, 1886, Cardinal Manning wrote to me: "On Saturday last Sir Thomas More was declared both martyr and saint, to my great joy. We have bought a house and garden, 28, Beaufort Street, which is said to be a piece of Sir Thomas More's garden. The tradition seems probable. If you can give me any light about it, I shall be very thankful."'

Later (January, 1888) Sir Charles writes: 'In the course of this same month I lectured on Old Chelsea, and made a considerable attempt to clear up some points in the life of Sir Thomas More, for whom I have a great admiration. The result was that Cardinal Manning asked me to visit Father Vaughan at the house which stands on the site of Old Beaufort House, which the Roman Catholics have purchased as a house of expiation for the martyrdom of Sir Thomas More.'

which he delivered more than once in Chelsea, but told as he told them they will never be told again.

This habit of associating the prosaic business of his daily work in Parliament with picturesque traditions, and of peopling the dingy streets of London with great figures of the past, gave colour and character to his town life. He entertained still—at 76, Sloane Street, or at the House of Commons.

For exercise he relied on fencing, rowing, and his morning ride. Busy men, he held, needed what "good exercise as contrasted with mere chamber gymnastics" could give them: "a second life, a life in another world—one which takes them entirely out of themselves, and causes them to cease to trouble others or to be troubled by the vexations of working life."*

He was nowhere more characteristically English than through his faith in this regimen, and in the pages of the *North American Review* he addressed to American public men in 1900 an advocacy of "Athletics for Politicians." This exists as a pamphlet, and some of the friends who received it were surprised to find themselves cited in confirmation of the theory that nearly all English politicians, "having been athletes as boys, have found it wise as well as pleasant to keep to some sport in later life." But Mr. Chamberlain, "the most distinguished debater in the Government of the United Kingdom, who has an excellent seat on a horse, but is never now seen on one, and who is no mean hand at lawn tennis, which he scarcely ever plays," had to be cited as a heretic who thought himself "better without such gymnastics."

Sculling on sliding-seats† and rapier fencing were the exercises which Sir Charles recommended to men no longer young. He continued his fencing in London and Paris. In Paris he frequented chiefly the school of Leconte in the Rue Saint Lazare, and always kept an outfit there. Teachers of this school remember with wonder Sir Charles's habit of

* *Athletics for Politicians*, reprinted from *North American Review*.

† In 1873 'sliding-seats' had just taken the place of fixed ones, and Sir Charles, having gone as usual to see the Boat Race, criticized the crews, in a notice which he wrote, as not having yet learnt to make the best possible use of the slide.

announcing, at the termination of each stay in Paris, the precise day and hour, perhaps many months ahead, at which he would appear—and at which, like Monte Cristo, he never failed to be exactly punctual—to the joy and amusement of the expectant school.

It was at his riverside home that he found the exercise which beyond all others pleased him best.

'1890 I took a good deal of holiday in the summer and early autumn, doing much rowing with McKenna and others in a racing pair; we challenged any pair of our united ages.'

'On my fifty-third birthday,' he notes, 'I began to learn sculling. My rowing, to judge by the "clock," still improves. Fencing, stationary or declining.'

He timed himself regularly in his daily burst up and down the reach with some first-rate oarsman, very often "Bill" East, now the King's Waterman, whose photograph stood with one or two others on the mantelpiece of his study in Sloane Street. In the same way he kept a daily record of his weight, which up to 1904 ranged between fourteen stone and thirteen.

Dockett was essentially a boating-place, a place for sun and air, where life was lived in the open or in the wide verandah hailed by Cecil Rhodes and others as the only "stoep" in England. His son, who was travelling abroad much at this time, shared Sir Charles Dilke's love for Dockett, and was frequently there in the intervals of his journeyings. Other than boating friends came to lunch or to dine and sleep, for the mere pleasure of talk. Such were the Arnold-Forsters, the H. J. Tennants, Lady Abinger (the daughter of his old friend Sir William White) and her husband: and there came also members of Parliament—Mr. Lloyd George, or in a later day Mr. Masterman; and the knights errant of politics, Mr. Cunninghame Graham and Mr. Schreiner. Many nationalities were represented—often, indeed, through official personages such as M. Cambon, the French Ambassador, or some member of the French Embassy. Baron Hayashi and his wife came with many other Japanese friends, and the various representatives of the Balkan States met in pleasant converse. It was one of these who afterwards wrote: "I never pass

the house in Sloane Street without raising my hat to the memory of its former inmates." That close friend M. Gennadius came also, and his predecessors in the Greek Legation, M. Metaxas, M. Athos Romanos, and half a score of other diplomatists, including Tigrane Pasha, and even Ras Makonnen, who was brought to Dockett by the British representative in Abyssinia, Sir John Harrington, a friend and correspondent of Dilke. Thither also for leisure, not for athletics, came Cecil Rhodes, described in *Problems of Greater Britain* as a "modest, strong man"; there came Prince Roland Bonaparte, Coquelin, and Jules Claretie, with a host of others, politicians, wits, and artists, English and foreign. M. Claretie thus, after Sir Charles's death, chronicled one visit:

"Nous avons canoté, mon fils et moi, sur la Tamise avec Sir Charles, un de ces 'Sundays' de liberté. Quand il avait bien ramé, il rentrait au logis, et s'étendant en un petit kiosque au seuil duquel il plaçait des sandales, l'homme d'état, ami du sport, accrochait à la porte un écriteau où se lisait ces mots: 'Prière de faire silence. Je dors.' Hélas! Il dort à tout jamais maintenant le cher Sir Charles. Ce fut une énergie, un cerveau, un cœur, une force."*

Then there were men illustrious in another sphere, the famous oars of their generation. Mr. S. D. Muttlebury, most illustrious of them all, has compiled a list of Cambridge "blues," young and old, who rowed with Sir Charles at his riverside home. These were—

	School.	*College.*
Bell, A. S.	Eton	Trinity Hall.
Bristowe, C. J.	Repton	,,
Escombe, F. J.	Clifton	,,
Fernie, W. J.	Malvern	,,
Howell, B. H.	—	,,
McKenna, R.	King's College, London	,,
Maugham, F. H.	Dover College	,,
Muttlebury, S. D.	Eton	Trinity College.
Rowlatt, J. F.	Fettes	Trinity Hall.
Steavenson, D. F.	—	,,
Wauchope, D. A.	Repton	,,
Wood, W. W.	Eton	University College, Oxford.

* *Le Temps*, February, 1911.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE ROWING.

From a photograph.

To face p. 318, Vol. II.

In the list here given, Judge Steavenson was Sir Charles's contemporary. Judge Wood,* his neighbour at Chertsey, known among Etonians as "Sheep" Wood, was a University oar of the sixties, and rowed for Eton at Henley against the Trinity Hall crew which included Steavenson and Dilke. But most of the others were young. Mr. Charles Boyd† sketched the life in an article written just after Sir Charles's death:

"To know Dilke as he was you had to be with him at Dockett Eddy, on the river. Dilke's ability is praised everywhere, but almost, one thinks, his manly, ungushing kindness exceeded it. He could never do enough for people, or too stealthily, as it were. He had a special kindness for young men, for Trinity Hall men perhaps by preference; the black and white blazer of his old college carried a certain prescriptive right to share in every belonging of the most famous of old Hall men. But many, oars or others, at different times in the past fifteen to twenty years, as sons of the house, spent between Shepperton and Chertsey Locks, or on the tennis lawns among Sir Charles's famous willows, or lying on deck-chairs on the long, deep verandah, the happiest and healthiest of week-ends or more extended summer holidays. There are few pleasanter reaches of our river, and none quieter, than this, for the rush and the intolerable crowds are above stream or below stream, but not here. And there is no such holiday house for young men as Dockett, hidden in its willow walks and islanded by the Thames in front and by the expanse of Chertsey Mead behind.

"Less a country-house, indeed, than a camp of exercise. You did as you pleased, but under Sir Charles's guidance you were pleased to be strenuous. He called everybody to bathe at 7 a.m., and where was ever better—fresh-water—bathing-place than the floating raft below the boat-house at Dockett? Etiquette required you to dive in and go straight across to the other bank, touch, and return; when, like as not, Sir Charles, in shorts and sweater, might be seen very precisely preparing tea on the landing-stage for the deserving valiant. His little kindnesses had an added and

* He was the son of Dilke's friend and constituent, the Rector of Newent.

† Mr. Charles Boyd, C.M.G., sometime political secretary to Cecil Rhodes.

affecting quality from his reserve and sternness. A rare figure of an athlete he was, and a rare athlete's day his was in that retreat. For hours before he called and turned out the morning guard he had been up busy gardening, or reading, or writing. At a quarter to nine he breakfasted. Very shortly after breakfast an ex-champion sculler, the admirable Bill East, would arrive from Richmond, and he and Sir Charles would row in a racing skiff a measured mile or more of the river. One summer at least he changed from rowing kit to boots and breeches after his rowing, and rode till luncheon. At four o'clock there would be a second bout with East, and thereafter, having changed from his rowing kit into flannels and his Hall cap, he would take Lady Dilke in her dinghy, which nobody else has ever used or will use.

"After these exercises came dinner, and after dinner talk; and what talk! How his intellectual weight and equipment affected those who were much with him as young men, and who had a chance to revise their impressions after years of close observation of the world and its big men, a scrap of dialogue may illustrate. One who in his 'twenties' was much at Sloane Street and Dockett, and who passed later into close working relations with several at least of the most conspicuous, so to say, of Front Bench men in the Empire, after an interval of thirteen years sat once more for a whole long evening with three others at the feet of Gamaliel. A well-known scholar and historian put questions which drew Sir Charles out; and all were amazed and delighted by the result. After Sir Charles had gone, one of the others, a distinguished editor, said to the wanderer: 'Come, you have known the Mandarins as well as anybody. Where do you put Dilke with them?' 'Well, I rule Lord Milner out,' said ——; 'but all the others, compared to Sir Charles, strike me in point of knowledge, if you must know, as insufficiently informed school-boys.' That is how his brain struck this contemporary. As for the moral qualities observed, you get to know a man well when you see him constantly and over years at play. And what intimate's affection and respect for Sir Charles, and confidence in him, did not grow greater with every year? It seems admitted that he was a great man. Well, if there is anything in the intimate, not undiscerning impression of nearly eighteen years, he was a good man, or goodness is an empty name."

Another account of his talk and ways comes from Mr. Spenser Wilkinson:

"I moved to London in 1892, and from that time on found the intimacy with Dilke one of the delights of life. We used always to meet, either for breakfast or lunch, at Dilke's house in Sloane Street, or for lunch at the Prince's Restaurant in Piccadilly, or at 2.30 in the lobby of the House of Commons. I was also frequently a guest at the dinner-parties either at Sloane Street on Wednesdays, when Lady Dilke was alive, or at the House of Commons. Then there were small house-parties on Saturday and Sunday at Dockett Eddy, near Shepperton on the Thames, where Sir Charles had built two cottages, and where a guest was expected to do exactly what he pleased from the time when he was punted across the river on arrival until he left the punt on departing. In winter I used to bicycle over to the cottage at Pyrford, where Dilke and his wife were always to be found alone and where I spent many a charming afternoon.

"Every man takes a certain tinge from the medium in which he is, and is therefore different in different company and different surroundings. I knew three Dilkes. First there was the statesman, the man of infinite information which he was ever working to increase. When you went to see him it was on some particular subject; he wanted precise information, and knew exactly what he wanted. With him my business was always finished in five minutes, after which I used to feel that I should be wasting his time if I stayed. This Dilke, in this particular form of intercourse, was by far the ablest man I ever met.

"Then came Dilke the host, the Dilke of general conversation. Here again he towered above his fellows. The man who had been everywhere and knew everybody—for there seemed to be no public man of great importance in any country with whom Dilke was not acquainted and with whom he had not corresponded—a man who was almost always in high spirits and full of fun, had an inexhaustible fund of delightful conversation, about which the only drawback was that, in order to appreciate it, you had to be uncommonly well informed yourself.

"But the Dilke I liked best was the one I used to have to myself when I spent a day with him either in the country or on the river, when neither of us had anything to do, when there was no business in hand, and when we either talked or were silent according to the mood. In these circumstances Dilke was as natural and simple as a civilized man can be. If one started an uncongenial subject, he would say, "It

does not interest me," but the moment one approached any of the matters he cared for he mobilized all his resources and gave himself with as little reserve as possible.

"Dilke was a past-master in the art of ordering his time, and this was the secret of the vast quantity of work which he was able to do. He was a voracious and quick reader, as is proved by the number of books which he used to review for the *Athenæum*, of which he was proprietor. Yet he was an early riser and went to bed early, and a part of his day was given to exercise.

"A great deal of time was consumed in interviews with all sorts and conditions of men, and his attendance at the House of Commons, constant and assiduous, accounted for a large part of half the days in the year. But everything was mapped out in advance; he would make appointments weeks, or even months, in advance, and keep them to the minute. His self-control was complete, his courtesy constant and unvarying; he was entirely free from sentimentality and the least demonstrative of mankind, yet he was capable of delicate and tender feelings, not always detected by those towards whom they were directed. He was simple, straightforward, frank, and generous. It was delightful to do business with him, for he never hesitated nor went back upon himself. Modest and free from self-consciousness, he was aware both of his powers and of their limitations. I once tried to persuade him to change the manner of his Parliamentary speeches, to stop his minute expositions of facts and to make some appeal to the emotions of his hearers —at any rate in cases where he had strong feelings of his own. He made one experiment in accord with this suggestion, and told me that it had been most successful; but he said that he would not try it again, because it was not in accord with his natural bent, and he was unwilling to be anything but himself."

Dockett was the home of the Birds. Sir Charles's evidence before the Select Committee on the Thames as to the destruction of kingfishers led to a prohibition of all shooting on the river, and to an increase of these lovely birds. In 1897 he had two of their nests at Dockett Eddy. His acres of willow-grown all-but-island were made a sanctuary for birds, and therefore from Dockett only, of all his homes, cats were kept away. Nests were counted and

cherished; it was a great year when a cuckoo's egg was discovered among the linnet's clutch, and its development was watched in breathless interest. Owls were welcome visitors; and the swans had no better nesting-place on the Thames than the lower end of Dockett. They and their annual progeny of cygnets were the appointed charge of Jim Haslett, Dilke's ferryman and friend. Pensioners upon the house, they used to appear in stately progress before the landing raft—the mother perhaps with several little ones swarming on her back or nestling in her wings, and from time to time splashing off into the water. Always at their appearance, in answer to Sir Charles's special call, a cry of "Swan's bread" would be raised, and loaf after loaf would disappear down their capacious throats. A place with such privileges was not likely to be undisputed, and many times there were battles royal against "invaders from the north," as Sir Charles called the Chertsey swans who came to possess themselves of the Dockett reach and its amenities. Swan charged swan, with plumage bristling and wings dilated, but not alone they fought; Jim Haslett and his employer took part against the invaders, beating them off with sticks; and even in the night, when sound of that warfare rose, the master of Dockett was known to scull out in a dinghy, in his night gear, carrying a bedroom candlestick to guide his blows in the fray.

Evening and morning he would steal along the bank in his dinghy, counting and observing the water-voles, which he was accustomed to feed with stewed prunes and other dishes, while they sat nibbling, squirrel-like, with the dainty clasped in their hands.

A few gay beds of annuals by the house, a purple clematis on the verandah, and a mass of syringa at the landing-stage, were all the garden permitted; roughly mown grass paths here and there led through the wild growth of nature, where the willows met overhead.

Such was his summer home, described in the lines of Tibullus which were carved on the doorway of the larger house:

"Jam modo iners possim contentus vivere parvo
Nec semper longæ deditus esse viæ,
Sed canis æstivos ortus vitare sub umbra
Arboris, ad rivos prætereuntis aquæ."*

He guarded its quiet, and, champion as he had always been of the public right of common on land and on the river, he was resentful when its privilege was carelessly abused. He rebuked those who broke the rules of the river in his marches—above all, such as disturbed swans or pulled water-lilies. After every Bank Holiday he would spend a laborious day gathering up the ugly leavings.

Many associations endeared to him what he thus defended. When he was out in the skiff, darting here and there, Lady Dilke, in the little dinghy which he had caused to be built for her—called from its pleasant round lines the *Bumble Bee*—would paddle about the reach. After her death he would paddle out in the dinghy which no one else might take out, and lie for hours watching the light change on that familiar and tranquil beauty of green mead and shining water, of high-waving poplar and willow, with drooping boughs awash. When he also was gone, the little boat was not suffered to pass into the use of strangers, but burnt there on the bank.

In his other home at Pyrford, all the day's relaxations were of this intimate kind.† Here also was no formal garden; Nature had her way, but under superintendence of a student of forestry. Sir Charles was a planter of pines; great note-books carefully filled tell how he studied, before the planting,

* Thus translated by the Rev. W. Tuckwell:

"Here, fancy-free, and scorning needless show,
Let me from Life's dull round awhile retreat,
Lulled by the full-charged stream's unceasing flow,
Screened by tall willows from the dog-star's heat."

† Here, too, work was disturbed by his natural history researches. He writes apologetically to Mr. Hudson as to some mistake in a letter: "I can plead as a disturbing cause three young brown owls, quite tame; one barks, and two whistle, squeak—between a railway guard and a door-hinge. The barker lets me get within four or five feet before he leaves off yapping. He worries the cuckoo into shouting very late. I leave the owls unwillingly, late—one night 1 a.m. They are still going strong."

DOCKETT EDDY.

From photographs.

To face p. 324, Vol. II.

the history of each species, how he watched over the experiments and extended them.*

In summer, on the dry heathy commons of Surrey, there is always danger of a chance fire spreading, and it was part of his care to maintain a cleared belt for fending off this danger. Much of his day went in gathering débris and undergrowth, so as to keep clear ground about the trees, and then the heaped-up gatherings rewarded him with a bonfire in which he had a child's pleasure, mingled with an artist's appreciation of the shapes and colours of flame. It was for praise of this beauty that he specially loved Anatole France's *Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque*, with its celebrations of the salamanders and their vivid element.

The heath blossom in all its kinds was cultivated, and it was his invariable custom to come up on a Monday from Pyrford with a spray of his favourite white heather in his buttonhole.

Here, too, were associations, interesting if not exactly historic. The Battle of Dorking was fought close by, and in this neighbourhood the Martians descended.

Chief of Pyrford's distinctions was the discovery on Sir Charles's own land, by Mr. Horace Donisthorpe, of a beetle (Lomechusa) which in Queen Anne's day Sir Hans Sloane had first identified in Hampstead, parasitic in a nest of red ants. A second specimen was found in 1710 in the mail-coach between Gloucester and Cheltenham; but from Queen Anne's day till 1906 it was regarded as extinct, until once more it was discovered, and discovered in its true place among the ants, on whose gestures and behaviour towards it, whether as indicating worship or serfdom, Sir Charles dilated with such rhetoric of description that the beetle

* Here is a detail entered concerning Lawson's cypress—*Erecta viridis:* "I remember Andrew Murray, of the Royal Horticultural, first describing Lawson's cypress, introduced by his brother in 1862, when my father was chairman of the society of which Murray was secretary. Our two are gardener's varieties, one greener and the other bluer than the true Lawson. The American name is Port Orford cedar. It will not do very well on our bad soil, but I've given it a pretty good place. It is said that Murray *first* sent it to Lawson of Edinburgh in 1854. This variety was made by A. Waterer in 1870."

assumed dimensions in the mind disappointing when it was viewed in reality.

Another rarity of insect life at Pyrford was a spider whose appearances have been oftenest noted at Hampton Court. These creatures, large, black, and horrific, were accordingly known as "Hampton Courters," but received no welcome, being slain on sight, their slayer quoting a characteristic saying which he had heard from Anatole France:

"We all know of dangers which seem more terrible than they are. The spider alone suffers death for his carelessness as to this habit of exaggeration. Many an uncle spider walks about by candlelight, and is slain by us on account of his monstrous shadow, whereas his body, being but small, would have escaped our rage."

It was here that much of his Memoir was dictated, based on an enormous mass of letters, papers, and private diaries, kept throughout his Government career. After 1891 there is only a scattered series of entries, increasingly sparse as time went on. Mr. Hudson recalls their walks from the station at Woking to Pyrford across the then open common, the lunch of eggs and milk, and the hours of work, during the period between the publication of *Problems of Greater Britain* and Sir Charles's return to Parliament for the Forest of Dean.

These two country homes, Pyrford and Dockett, held Sir Charles so fast with their simple pleasures that the once insatiable traveller ceased to roam. At the close of 1892, after his return to Parliament, he sold his house and garden at Toulon. Pyrford to a great extent had come to take its place. But to the end of his days he was a constant visitor to that Provençal country which he loved. Apart from them there was another place where, though he neither owned nor rented house or land, he was no less at home than among his willows or his pines. No resident in the Forest of Dean was better known in it than its member, and nowhere had Sir Charles more real friends. For many years he spent three periods among them: his Whitsun holiday, which was very much a visit of pleasure; a visit in autumn, when he attended all meetings of the Revision Courts; and finally

PYRFORD ROUGH.

From photographs.

To face p. 326, Vol. II.

a month in the dead of winter, when he went round to meetings in each polling district, at night educating his electors in the political questions of the time, and in the day working with his local friends at the register till it became the most accurate record of its kind in all Great Britain—so perfect, indeed, that he was at last able to discontinue his attendance at the Revision Courts, though never relaxing his keen personal interest in every change.

His friendships in the Forest were not bounded by class or party. He had the support, not merely of the Liberal and Labour groups, but of many strong Conservatives, here as before at Chelsea. Mention has been made of Mr. Blake, and another friend was Mr. John Probyn, who had stood as a Liberal candidate for Devizes as far back as 1868, and had not changed his views. Of his many faithful friends and supporters, one, the honorary secretary of the Liberal Association for all Sir Charles's years of membership, had as far back as 1886 proclaimed his faith in him.* Another equally active in conveying the original invitation to Sir Charles was the agent of the Forest miners, a Labour leader of the wisest type,† who writes:

"He did not live for himself; it was always others first. I never made an appeal to him for any case of need in vain. With regard to local matters, he seemed at the beck and call of nearly everyone. Nothing was too small or too large for him to undertake to assist any constituent, and oftentimes an avowed and lifelong political opponent. In a multitude of ways he did us service with his knowledge of affairs, his influence, his experience, his ability and work.

"In the matters of commoners' right, the right of 'turn-out' on the Forest, free miners' rights, questions of colliery owners, matters relating to the Crown, the development of the lower coal seams—in all these (and many of them are local intricate historical questions involving a mass of detail) he rendered valuable service.

"In his electoral battles he was always a keen fighter and a courteous opponent. In every campaign he seemed more anxious to beat his opponent by sheer weight of reason and

* Mr. John Cooksey, formerly proprietor of the *Dean Forest Mercury*.

† Mr. G. H. Rowlinson.

argument, and intellect and knowledge, than by any appeal to party passion or feeling.

"I have been at a great many of his meetings, and never saw him shirk a question, nor saw one put to him that he did not, nine times out of ten, know more about than the questioner, however local the point might be.

"As an example, he was holding a meeting at Newnham. Questions were invited; none asked. Sir Charles looked disappointed; so Mr. King, of the 'Victoria,' in a friendly way, thought he would put him a poser, and asked his opinion about Sir Cuthbert Quilter's Pure Beer Bill.

"For about twenty minutes Sir Charles talked beer—the origin, ingredients, what it should be, what it often is and what it is not, what it is in other countries. As Mr. King remarked afterwards, he told him more about beer than he ever knew before, though he had been in the trade all his life."

Probably none was more rejoiced at the unexpected display than the genial Tory host of the Victoria, who lived to deplore his friend and to quote especially one of his observations: "If you see a man put on 'side,' Sir Charles once said to me, you may be sure he feels the need of it."*

Part of the service which he rendered to the constituency was by means of the honorary presidency of the Liberal Four Hundred, first created, to be held by himself, in 1889. Under this title the foremost spokesmen of Liberalism were in successive years brought into the Forest;† and thus member and constituents worked together alike in political and in personal friendship. He hailed the little clump of trees on the conical top of Mayhill, the first landmark which indicated the Forest, almost as if it stood above his home. All was homelike to him as he drove from the pastoral country by the Severn, with its apple and pear orchards, to the typical mining town of Cinderford, and on to the great expanse of Forest in whose midmost glade was the Speech House Hotel, more ancient than the hollies about it, which had been

* Among those who worked with him and for him best and longest should be named at least Mr. Charles Ridler and Mr. T. A. H. Smith of Lydney, Mr. Henry Davis of Newent, Mr. B. H. Taylor, and Mr. S. J. Elsom.

† The list included Mr. Asquith, Lord Morley, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Lloyd George, and Lord Loreburn.

planted to mark Charles II.'s Restoration. The Panelled Room, always reserved for his use during his stay there, had been for many generations the place in which the free miners met to hold their courts; it had been built for the purpose, as the gallery for speakers showed.

He loved the Forest—not only the distant spots of interest, but every tree, delighting to act as guide to all its pleasant places. So each new guest was taken to see High Beeches and the great wind-swept row of Scots firs by Clearwell Court. The aged oak-tree, which at a distance resembled a barn—for nothing was left but its great trunk above the roots—was another point of pilgrimage; so were the dwarf thorns on Wigpool Common, which reminded him of the tiny Japanese trees centuries old, as, indeed, probably were these.

Then there were the expeditions to the rocking stone called the Buckstone, a relic of the Druids; to the Scowles, the wonderful Roman iron workings like the Syracusan quarries; to Symons Yat, where the old military earthworks ended in a triple dyke, with the Severn and the Wye on either side; to Newland Church, in which a fifteenth-century brass shows the free miner of those days equipped for work; or to the lovely valley by Flaxley Abbey, once in the precincts of the Forest, where the monks had their fish-ponds, and where on the side of the hills their old ironworks may still be seen.

He and Lady Dilke rode early in their stay to all these outlying places, with Miss Monck as their constant companion. She was President of the Women's Liberal Association, stayed with them during their long visits to the Forest, and was with him for the election at the end.*

These were far rides, but close about the Speech House the place teems with interest. In the last years he would walk every evening to look at the great stag-headed ruins of the oaks, which thrust their gnarled and crooked limbs fantastically into the closing night, or stand watching the

* Miss Emilia Monck, sister of Mr. Berkeley Monck, of Coley Park, Reading, of which he was several times Mayor, and which he contested as a Liberal in 1886.

shadows fall on the spruce rides which stretch out near the old inn, till, in the fading light, it seemed as though figures were moving in and out on the greensward of the great vistas. In the bright sunshine, imposing silence on himself and his companions, he would watch for long together the life in one of the forest glades, the moving creatures in the grass, the tits playing on the branches of a silver birch silhouetted against the sky, the little blue butterflies chasing each other over the pink crab-apple bloom. He would follow the tapping of a woodpecker, and wait in the evening for the owl's cry to begin; and here, as elsewhere, to be with him was to see in everything unsuspected things.

In the winter, Speech House was at first Sir Charles's headquarters for part of January, but there, 500 feet above the sea, the roads were sometimes impassable from snow. At last Lady Dilke became too delicate to face the mid-winter visit, and, except for elections, Whitsuntide and the autumn were the two occasions for their stay. He went also each year to the miners' demonstration—in 1908 so ill that it seemed impossible that even his power of endurance could enable him to bear the strain, and in 1910 again because he said he "would not fail Rowlinson and the miners," though he fainted after the meeting there.

One of their early headquarters in the Forest was Lindors, the home of two among their first and warmest friends—Mr. Frederick Martin and his wife. It is in a lovely little valley with sheltered lawns, the rush of the water sounding always behind the house, above which the old castle of St. Briavels stands. The ancient prison is still there, and the castle dates back to the thirteenth century, and claims an almost unbroken succession of Constables of the Castle and Wardens of the Forest of Dean, beginning with John de Monmouth.

After Speech House the Victoria at Newnham saw them oftenest. Its interior is fascinating, with a low hall and fine old oak stairway, broad and shallow; a bit of quaint French glass let into the staircase window bears an illustrated version of La Fourmi et la Cigale. Lady Dilke found

there a remnant of fine tapestry—a battle scene with a bold picture of horses and their riders. She traced and located this as belonging to a great panel which is in the Palace at Madrid. At each election, after the declaration of the poll, Sir Charles made from a balcony of the Victoria or from a motor-car his speech to the cheering constituents, who had followed him from the town-hall, first under happiest circumstance, with his wife waiting for him in the porch, later alone, till the last occasion, in December, 1910, when he fought and won the election, dying, but with dogged courage; and as he spoke of the long term of Liberal government which would ensue before a new electoral struggle, friends standing near caught the words, "When I shall not be here."

* * * * *

Sir Charles had given up the habit of travel except for some special purpose, as when in 1897 he journeyed with Lady Dilke to see the Nattiers at Stockholm, or in another year to Bordeaux for her work on French Art in the Eighteenth Century. But every Christmas they went for a month to Paris. It was the great holiday of their year, and all the engagements were made far ahead. There was interest in their Parisian associations, for their differing attainments made them part of various separate coteries not familiarly accessible to English people.

Their friends were of all worlds, political, literary, artistic, and social; and since Sir Charles's intimacy with France dated back to boyhood, and Lady Dilke's to the days of her first close study of French art, which, beginning in the sixties with the French Renaissance, terminated in her big work on French Art in the Eighteenth Century, their friendships extended over a long period of years, though each fresh visit enlarged their circle of friends and acquaintances.

In the memoir prefixed to her *Book of the Spiritual Life* Sir Charles says of his wife:

"Those who are familiar with several languages learn instinctively to take the natural manners of the people who are for the moment their companions. So it was with

Lady Dilke. . . . In Paris she was French with sufficient difference to give distinction." As to himself, his great friend M. Joseph Reinach wrote, "Dilke connaissait la France mieux que beaucoup d'entre nous." But while his command of the French language and his knowledge of many sides of French life quickened his genial intercourse with the French, he never failed to impress them as an English statesman. He paid his French friends the compliment of adopting many little mannerisms; and however pure the French he spoke, he always entertained himself by keeping up to date his acquaintance with French slang, so that the latest developments of fashionable Paris jargon were familiar to him. Yet that never could be said of him which he himself noted of his friend M. Richard Waddington, brother to William Waddington, for many years Ambassador in London, and, in Sir Charles's opinion, a man of even higher ability than the Ambassador. Of this friend, half French, half English, he said that he had two mentalities, and that among Englishmen he was English, among Frenchmen French. Sir Charles's talk with Frenchmen was unrestrained; as Bismarck felt of England, so he of France: "We have nothing to conceal from the French; they are our natural allies." But it was always the Englishman who spoke; no slight veneer of manner in his social intercourse could conceal that.

There are many scattered entries in his Diary which show how great a relaxation the Paris holiday yielded.

"At Christmas at Paris we were always gay, though often among the aged. The gayest dinner I remember was at Henri Germain's with Gérôme, Gaston Boissier, Laboulaye, and others, all about eighty, I being the chicken of the party."

Gérôme, the painter, is often mentioned. Laboulaye must have been Paul Laboulaye, born 1833, the diplomatist who had been Ambassador to St. Petersburg in 1886. It was during his embassy that the *rapprochement* took place between France and Russia which was announced to Europe by the welcome of the French fleet to Cronstadt.

Gaston Boissier, Perpetual Secretary of the French

Academy, and a great classical scholar, figures again with another friend, M. Bonnat, in Sir Charles's memoir of his wife; for he notes that during their last Christmas in Paris, in 1903, "the gaiety of their meetings" with these two friends and others "had been as unrestrained as ever." Earlier memories recall the sculptors Christophe and Gustave Moreau. Christophe's beautiful "Mask," of which Lady Dilke had written, stands in the Tuileries Garden, and was some time ago horribly disfigured by inkstain. One of Sir Charles's late letters was written to M. Joseph Reinach, to ask whether anything had yet been done to cleanse this work of the sculptor she venerated. Only two small casts were made by Christophe from the statue, and one of these, given to her by him, decorated the Pyrford home. So did a picture by François Louis Français, another artist friend, chief in his day of the water-colour school, a picture which had inspired one of her stories, and gave the motto, "Dites-moi un Pater," to her *Shrine of Death*. In all the later and in some of the earlier friendships Sir Charles shared, as he did in those of the great custodians of art treasures. M. de Nolhac, the poet and the Curator of Versailles, was prominent among them, and Eugène Müntz head of the École des Beaux Arts. Lady Dilke's correspondence with the latter, extending over a period of twenty-three years, is preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale.

One great friend among collectors was M. Gustave Dreyfus, a high authority on Donatello and on the medallists of the Italian Renaissance. At his house there was another attraction in the shape of the concierge's cat, on whom Sir Charles would call before paying his respects upstairs. At another house a cat named Pouf was held in great honour by him, and his feelings were deeply wounded when, with feline capriciousness, it turned, on Paul Hervieu's entrance, to bestow all its blandishments on the writer. His love of cats was as well known to his French as to his English friends. Émile Ollivier writes in 1891 from La Moutte: "Campion lui-même cherche d'un regard affligé son protecteur disparu"; and M. André Chevrillon, being "touché

par la façon dont je vous ai entendu parler de ce divin animal," sent him Taine's sonnets "À trois chats, Puss, Ébène, et Mitonne, dédiés par leur ami, maître, et serviteur."

Memorials of dinners with the well-known collector Camille Groult were preserved in the shape of some sketches, one of a cavalier in peruke and cravat, another an excellent crayon head of the host, by Domingo, the Spanish artist, drawn on the back of a torn menu and given by him to Lady Dilke.

The Groults' admiration of the beauty of Dockett Eddy was testified in the gift of a little reflecting mirror, a "camera obscura," which, held to the light, made exquisite vignettes of river, clematis, and syringa; and a dinner at 76, Sloane Street was marked by the gift of little copies of M. Groult's famous lately acquired Fragonard, in which Cupid levels his arrows at the dainty feet of a well-known dancer of the time.

The sculptor Rodin was an acquaintance of late years, and a Christmas card sent to 76, Sloane Street, in the form of a framed and signed pencil sketch of a female head, was that master's tribute to Sir Charles's heresy that Rodin drew much better than he sculptured.

"For old Français," says Sir Charles, "Lady Dilke had the veneration she felt for Christophe among sculptors," and for a few women, such as Mme. Renan. To both the Renans they were bound by ties of familiar friendship, and some of their pleasantest hours were spent at the Collège de France. On November 11th, 1880, there is a note of Sir Charles's of a talk with Gambetta: 'They discussed Renan's "Souvenirs," which were appearing in the *Revue* for November, wonderfully entertaining, and perfectly beautiful in style.' It was Renan who had presented Lady Dilke's two volumes on the French Renaissance, in 1880, to the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, with an admiring report, and Sir Charles's admiration for Renan's writing was great. Of Mme. Renan he says: "This homely-looking old dame was not only a good

wife, but a woman of the soundest sense and the most upright judgment."

The same feeling of attachment and respect bound them to Mme. de Franqueville,* the first wife of Sir Charles's old friend M. de Franqueville, whom he saw often both in Paris and London. They visited them at La Muette, famous for its memories of Marie Antoinette, where in the early years of her prosperity she would take her companions to play at dairying with dainty emblazoned milkpails.

One whose friendship dated far back was Émile Ollivier, and with him Sir Charles often discussed, both in Paris and at St. Tropez, a vanished era in France's history, that of the "Liberal Empire." To these talks the Prime Minister of Napoleon III. would bring such wealth of oratory and such fertility of gesticulation that his hearers felt themselves transported to a crowded chamber, of which he occupied the rostrum, and woke with bewilderment to find themselves in the tranquil calm of his sun-flooded Southern home. There were those who said that the point of view urged with such conviction varied, and Sir Charles retains a *mot* of M. Jusserand: "Émile Ollivier change souvent d'idée fixe." Mme. Émile Ollivier, his devoted second wife and helper, was also a great friend, and her photograph was one of those which Lady Dilke kept near her.

"Relations of the pleasantest kind," says Sir Charles, were formed with the Duc d'Aumale, in Mr. Bodley's phrase "last of the grands seigneurs of France." On September 25th, 1895, the Duke wrote asking them "to spend a whole day going through the books at Chantilly." "The charm of these books, however, and of these repeated visits of 1895 and 1896, lay in the fact that books and drawings alike excited historic memory."

"In October, 1895, we were in Paris, and took Went† to stay at Vaux, that he might see the finest of the châteaux, and also the room where, according to Dumas, Aramis and Porthos carried off Louis XIV., though d'Artagnan saved him again. We also went ourselves

* Mlle. Érard.

† Sir Charles Dilke's son, the present Sir C. Wentworth Dilke.

to lunch at Chantilly with the Duc d'Aumale, who told us how Mme. Adélaïde, his aunt, used to slap his brother, the Prince de Joinville, already a distinguished naval officer, and stop his talking politics with, "Tais-toi, méchant morveux, qui oses critiquer la politique de ton père." Comtesse Berthe de Clinchamp has looked after the house since the days of the Duchesse d'Aumale, though she lives in another house. This distinguished old dame was also there. A daughter of the Duc de Chartres was once slapped by her aunt, the Comtesse de Paris, in public, for asking to be taken to stay at Chantilly with "tante de Clinchamp." In 1896 to 1897 we were a great deal at Chantilly, finding the Duke interesting with his reminiscences of his father's account of the Court of Louis XVI. With the ex-King of Westphalia, and Bismarck, the Duc d'Aumale was in old age the most interesting companion that I have known. It was the projecting of his stories into a newer generation that made them good. Sir S. Smith ("Long Acre") was a bore at the Congress of Vienna, but would have been delightful to us could we have known him.'*

When in May, 1897, the Duke suddenly died, Lady Dilke wrote a little article which, in spite of the sadness of the circumstances of his death and the consequent deep note of pathos, in certain parts of the obituary recalled very happily the brightness of their talks. Letters of the time speak of the losses which the Dilkes and their friends had sustained by the fire at the charity bazaar which had indirectly caused the Duke's death, through that of the Duchesse d'Alençon, his favourite niece. One of Lady Dilke's dearest friends in France, the Marquise de Sassenaye, had escaped, but several of her relations who were with her had died a dreadful death. The tie with these friends was very close, and the daughter of the Marquise de Sassenaye, the Baronne de Laumont, and her granddaughter, the Comtesse Marquiset, were among Sir Charles's last guests at the House of Commons. But he did not live to know that

* Sir Sidney Smith must have been prolix over his achievements at the siege of Acre and elsewhere. It is certain that a reputation for bombast injured his career and caused his remarkable achievements to be underrated.

his friend the Baron de Laumont and his only son laid down their lives for France in 1915.

Colonel Picquart Sir Charles had met in 1891 during the "belles journées de ces manœuvres de l'Est," chronicled by M. Joseph Reinach. He deeply admired the character of this noble and chivalrous gentleman, who, convinced that wrong had been done to an innocent man, sacrificed his fine career to save him, and suffered for his Dreyfusism by imprisonment and military degradation. Sir Charles met Picquart often at the table of M. Labori and elsewhere, and at one dinner when Émile Zola was present in 1899 there were also two English friends, the genial Sir Campbell Clarke, Paris correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, and his kind wife, at whose house in Paris the Dilkes dined almost every Christmas Day. He touched in this way the struggle over the Dreyfus affair, and his attitude is summed up in a letter conveying through M. Reinach to Colonel Picquart "that intense sympathy which I do not express publicly only because all we English say does more harm than good."*

His friendship with M. Joseph Reinach, so often mentioned, dates back to the days when the latter was Gambetta's secretary. "C'est par Gambetta que j'ai connu Dilke," says M. Reinach. "Gambetta avait pour lui une vive affection." In London and in Paris they met and talked and fenced, and kept in touch by close political correspondence. "Dilke was a great friend of mine, and I thought him a true and intrepid patriot and citizen," said M. Reinach; and perhaps of all M. Reinach's great qualities it was his courage which most provoked the admiration of Sir Charles and of

* 'At Christmas, 1900, in Paris we met Labori and Colonel Picquart two nights running, and heard fully the reasons of their quarrel with the Dreyfus family, which will probably all come out. Labori with great eloquence, and Picquart quietly, developed the view that Dreyfus, by virtually accepting the amnesty along with his own freedom, has taken up the position of a guilty man and sacrificed all those who have sacrificed everything for him. When, during the season of 1901, Labori came to London, and we saw much of him, he had toned down this view, or did not think it wise to express it. But it came out in November, 1901.'

his wife. They knew all the three brothers, and M. Salomon Reinach, asking Sir Charles to come and discuss manuscripts, signs himself "in admiration of your enormous knowledge" —a happy tribute from one of whom it was said "il sait tout." "Salomon Reinach, the outgoing President of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres," writes Sir Charles in 1908 to Lord Fitzmaurice, "is what Arthur Strong (Librarian of House of Lords) was, and Acton tried to be, 'universal.' He asked me to listen to him for two whole evenings, till we became a nuisance to our hosts—on the way in which, despite our Historical Manuscripts Commission, we still lock up papers. His strongest examples were Horace Mann's letters to Horace Walpole, and the letters received by the Duke of Wellington (the loss of nearly all the letters written by J. S. Mill moves me more)."

M. Pallain, Regent of the Bank of France, was another friend whose acquaintance with Sir Charles dated back to the days when he was Gambetta's secretary. His book on Talleyrand, the "fameux livre de Pallain," as Sir Charles calls it in a letter to M. Jusserand, was hardly less interesting to him than his mastership of French finance.

The Siegfrieds, representatives of the wealthy and serious Protestant world, were friends who shared Sir Charles's interest in questions of social reform, as was that wisest of permanent officials, M. Fontaine, head of the French Labour Department; and he discussed these matters also with the great representative of Roman Catholic Socialism, Count Albert de Mun. The list of his Diary engagements, ranging over a long period of time, is filled with the names of French writers, from Ludovic Halévy, the novelist and dramatist (passages from whose *Belle Hélène* he would recite and whistle), to Anatole France; and of politicians of every school of thought, from Léon Say, "a statesman of rare competence," to M. Delcassé, whom he saw often, Deschanel, Léon Bourgeois, Millerand, Viviani, and that great friend of Greece—M. Denys Cochin; Calmette, the editor of the *Figaro*, assassinated by Mme. Caillaux; and

Lépine, the Prefect of Police; while Jaurès was a London as well as a Paris guest.

The excellence of much French acting attracted Sir Charles and his wife to the theatre in Paris, though in London their visits to a play were rare. M. Jules Claretie, the Academician, and for nearly thirty years, till his death in 1913, the distinguished Director of the Théâtre Français, constantly put his box at their disposal, and rarely failed to join them for a talk between the acts.

There is a reply from General de Galliffet, the "beau sabreur"—that brilliant soldier whom Sir Charles had followed through the French manœuvres—accepting a theatre invitation in 1892: "J'ai, en principe, l'horreur du théâtre; j'en bénis le ciel puisque je pourrai ainsi mieux jouir de votre société et de celle de Lady Dilke."

In these visits to Paris they went always to the Hôtel St. James, in the Rue St. Honoré, attracted by the beauty and interest of their rooms there. It is the old Hôtel de Noailles, and the staircase and landing, and several of the rooms, are still as they were when three members of the family—grandmother, mother, and daughter—were guillotined at the time of the French Revolution. The guard-room at the head of the stairs, with its great folding doors, and the paved landing with its old *dalles*, are intact, as are some of the state-rooms. Their sitting-room and the great bedroom opening from it looked out on to the courtyard, where in old days, before it became a courtyard and when the garden stretched away to the Seine, Marie Antoinette walked and talked, the story goes, with La Fayette, with whom her friend Mme. de Noailles had arranged an interview. The windows and balconies here, and part of the garden front, resemble exactly their representations in pictures of the period.

They saw many of their friends during the year both at the House of Commons and at Dockett. Describing them in London, dining in the room decorated by Gambetta's portrait, M. Jules Claretie writes: "La première fois que j'eus l'honneur d'être l'hôte de Sir Charles la charmante

Lady Dilke me dit, souriante, 'Ici vous êtes en France. Savez-vous qui est notre cuisinier ? L'ancien brosseur de Général Chanzy.'" And among Sir Charles's collection of Dockett photographs was one in which the chef, accompanied by the greater artist, the elder Coquelin, was fishing from a punt on the Thames.

"Je me rappelle avec tristesse," says the same friend in February, 1911, "les beaux soirs où, sur la terrasse du Parlement, en regardant, de l'autre côté de la Tamise, les silhouettes des hauts monuments, là-bas, sous les étoiles, dans la nuit, nous causions avec Sir Charles de cet *Athenæum*, la revue hebdomadaire où il accumulait tant de science, et dont j'avais été un moment, après Philarète Chasles et Edmond About, le correspondant Parisien; puis de Paris, de la France de l'avenir—du passé aussi."

When M. Jules Claretie came to London to deliver a lecture in 1899 on the French and English theatre, Sir Charles was asked to preside, and also to assist in welcoming him at the Ambassador's table. The charming and unfailing friendship of that Ambassador, M. Paul Cambon, is worthy of record, and Sir Charles's admiration for him was very marked. He used to say that so long as a great Ambassador, either French or English, represented his nation in Paris or London, the other representative might be a cipher, and M. Cambon's embassy in London sufficed for both countries. "He is a man," he wrote to Mr. Morley in 1892, "who (with his brother Jules) will survive Ribot, and even Freycinet."

Another close friend was M. Jusserand, whose graceful studies of English literary history adorned the Pyrford bookshelves. While he was counsellor to the Embassy in London he was a frequent guest at 76, Sloane Street, and when he became Ambassador at Washington he still kept in constant touch with Sir Charles.

"Dès qu'on nous parle d'un homme d'état étranger, ministre ou diplomate," says M. Joseph Reinach, writing of Sir Charles, "c'est notre première question: Aime-t-il la France ? C'est une sottise. Un Italien n'aime que l'Italie, un Russe n'aime que la Russie, un Anglais n'aime que

l'Angleterre." It may be so. In 1887 Sir Charles wrote to M. Reinach concerning the possibility that Bismarck would attack France, which, he added, "everybody thinks likely except your humble servant, Lord Lyons, and Sir E. Malet, our new man at Berlin." If it did happen, said he, "whatever use I can be I shall be, either if I can best serve France by writing here, or by coming to be a private of volunteers and by giving all I can to the French ambulances." Some there are who can recall Sir Charles's face as he turned over the pages of M. Boutet de Monvel's *Jeanne d'Arc*, and dwelt on that first picture in which the little "piou-pious" of the modern army advance, under the flag on which are inscribed the battles of the past; while the Old Guard rises from the earth to reinforce their ranks, and the ghostly figure of Jeanne d'Arc, symbolizing the spirit of France, leads on to victory. Listening as he talked, his hearers became infected with Sir Charles's spirit, and thinking of the past, looking to the future, he so kindled them that when he closed the book they all were "lovers of France."

CHAPTER LII

LABOUR

1870–1911

I.

"From 1870 to this date one man has stood for all the great causes of industrial progress, whether for the agricultural labourers, or in the textile trades, or in the mining industries, or with the shop assistants. That man is Sir Charles Dilke." So, in 1910, spoke Dr. Gore, the present Bishop of Oxford, at that time Bishop of Birmingham.

In Sir Charles's early days, economists were still governed by individualist doctrines. The school of *laissez faire* was the prevailing school of thought, and in its teaching he was trained. "We were all Tory anarchists once," was his own summary of the views which characterized that economic theory. But to "let alone" industrial misery early became for Sir Charles a counsel of despair. *Greater Britain*, published in 1868, when he was twenty-five, gave indications of a change of view, and his close friendship with John Stuart Mill directly furthered this development. Mill's lapses into heresy from the orthodox economics of the day were notable, and Sir Charles was wont to point to a passage written by Mill in the forties showing that sweated wages depressed all wages, and to claim him as the pioneer of the minimum wage.

It was left for Mill's disciple to become one of the foremost champions of the legislation which now protects the industrial conditions of the worker, and also the guardian of its effective administration.

His policy was distinguished by his determination to act with those for whom the legislation was created, and

to induce them to inspire and to demand measures for their own protection. The education of the industrial class, the object of "helping the workers to help themselves," was never absent from his mind. This view went farther than the interest of a class: he held the stability of the State itself to be menaced by the existence of an unorganized and depressed body of workers. An organized and intelligent corporate demand put forward by trained leaders chosen from the workers' own ranks was essential to the development and stability of industrial conditions and to appropriate legislation. Sir Charles was therefore the unwavering advocate of trade-unionism. It is worth while to emphasize his attitude, since views now generally accepted were not popular in the sixties. His first speech to his Chelsea electors in 1867 dealt with his trade-union position, as it did with the need for strengthening the Factory Acts.

Violent utterances on the part of certain sections of Labour did not affect his advocacy of its claims, for he would have endorsed the words of Cardinal Manning written to him on September 13th, 1884: "It is the cause of the people mismanaged by imprudent and rough words and deeds; but a people suffering long and stung by want of sympathy cannot speak like county magistrates." During the later period of his life he tried, at innumerable meetings all over Great Britain, to help trade-unionists to make their claims understood. So he came to fill "a unique position as counsellor, friend, and adviser to the Labour cause."*

His belief in trade-unionism was never shaken; for though he did not pretend that in the distant future trade-unionism would be sufficient to redress all social ills, holding it, as Lady Dilke did, to be, not "the gospel of the future, but salvation for the present," he believed that during his lifetime it was far from having perfected its work. He was a strong municipal Socialist, but with regard to State Socialism he would never bind himself to any general

* Letter from the Rt. Hon. George Barnes, Labour M.P. for the Blackfriars division of Glasgow, and Minister for Pensions in Mr. Lloyd George's Government of 1916, once general secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers.

theory; he was in favour of large experiments and of noting those made elsewhere; beyond this he "did not see his way."

His faith in the maintenance of all safeguards for trade-unions was well demonstrated by his action on the occasion of the Taff Vale judgment and its sequel.* He wished to keep for them the inviolability of corporate funds which formed their strength and staying power. While he admitted that theoretically a good case could be made out against such inviolability, he was clear that in practice it was essential to the continued existence of Labour as an organized force, capable of self-defensive action. The conference on the effect of the Taff Vale decision held in October, 1901, was arranged by him after consultation with Mr. Asquith, who suggested Sir Robert Reid and Mr. Haldane as legal assessors. How grave was the position which the judgment had created may be gathered from the declaration of Mr. Asquith in a letter to Sir Charles written on December 5th, 1901: "How to conduct a strike legally now, I do not know." He advised the introduction of two Bills, one to deal with the question of trade-union funds, the other with picketing, etc. In April, 1902, Sir Charles Dilke introduced the deputation, organized to ask for special facilities for discussion, to Lord James of Hereford, who received it on behalf of the Cabinet, and to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman as Leader of the Opposition.

In an article contributed by him to the *Independent Review* of June, 1904, he notes a private offer of the Government for dealing with the matter by a small Royal Commission of experts, whose recommendations should be

* *Taff Vale Judgment.*—As trade-unions were not incorporated, it was generally assumed that they could not be sued, but in 1900 Mr. Justice Farwell decided that a trade-union registered under the Trade-Union Acts, 1871 and 1876, might be sued in its registered name; and this decision, after being reversed in the Court of Appeal, was restored by the House of Lords in 1901. The result of this case (the Taff Vale Railway Company *v.* the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants) was that damages could be obtained against a trade-union for the acts of their officials in "picketing" during a strike; and by making the trustees in whom the funds were vested defendants, an order could be obtained for the payment of damages and costs out of the accumulated funds of the trade-union.

immediately followed by legislation. This was refused by the Labour leaders, and he thought it a lost opportunity for what might have been a favourable settlement.* But at the same time 'the Taff Vale judgment virtually brought the separate Labour party into existence, and the difficulty of upsetting the judgment and of amending the law of conspiracy will,' he said, 'nurture, develop, and fortify it in the future.' To him this was matter for satisfaction.†

His absence from the House of Commons from 1886 to 1892 gave him leisure for deep study of industrial questions, and he drew much of illustration and advice from his knowledge of colonial enterprise in social reform. Thus, in his advocacy of a general eight-hour day, observation of colonial politics largely guided his suggestions. In his first speech in the Forest of Dean in 1889, he said: "Australia has tried experiments for us, and we have the advantage of being able to note their success or failure before we imitate or vary them at home." The experiments in regard to regulation of hours and wages which colonial analogy justified should, he urged, be carried out by Government and by the municipalities as employers and in their contracts. His visits to our Colonies were followed by con-

* Mr. D. J. Shackleton, an Insurance Commissioner, and appointed Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour in December, 1916, was in 1906 M.P. for Clitheroe, and a prominent member of the Labour party. He writes of the passing of the Trade Disputes Act, which reversed the Taff Vale judgment: "It was my privilege to be the spokesman for the Labour party and Joint Board on the Trade Disputes Bill in the House of Commons. On the evening when the Bill was read a third time in the House of Lords, the three National Committees gave me a complimentary dinner at the House of Commons. In the course of my speech in reply to the toast, I expressed, on behalf of the Labour movement and myself, our sincere and grateful thanks to Sir Charles for the very valuable help he had given us through all our Parliamentary fights. My consultations with him whilst the Bill was before the House were almost daily. On many occasions he crossed the floor to give me points in answer to speeches that were made in opposition to the Labour position."

† A full account of the action taken by Sir Charles on the Taff Vale judgment and the Trade Disputes Act which reversed its decision will be found in Appendix II. to this chapter, furnished by Miss Mary Macarthur (now Mrs. W. C. Anderson). Miss Macarthur, secretary of the Women's Trade-Union League from 1903, worked with Sir Charles on many questions.

stant correspondence with Colonial statesmen, especially with Mr. Deakin, and the introduction here of minimum-wage legislation may be traced to Sir Charles's close study of Colonial experiment.

But he never narrowed his policy to developments which would confine the leaders of Labour to the management of the internal affairs of their trade-unions; he early urged the representation of Labour by Labour in Parliament, where its influence on legislation affecting its interests would be direct, and there is a note in his Diary in 1906, when the "Labour party" in Parliament came into existence, chronicling the "triumph of the principles" to which during his life that part of his activities devoted to Labour had been given.

In 1894, when the Independent Labour party was emerging into light, he had advocated in talks with Labour friends its development into the Labour party of later days. But he noted the limits which bounded his own co-operation except as an adviser: "My willingness to sink home questions and join the Tories in the event of a war, and my wish to increase the white army in India and the fleet—even as matters stand—are a bar."

There were those who prophesied that the Labour party's appearance had no permanent interest; that it owed its existence to political crises, and would soon fade out of the life of Parliament. Sir Charles, on the contrary, was clear that it constituted a definite and permanent feature in Parliamentary life. It might vary in number and in efficiency; it might, like other parties, have periods of depression; but it was henceforth a factor to be reckoned with in politics. Its power, however, must largely depend upon its independence. The point to which an independent party can carry its support of the Government in power must not be overstepped, and when, as in 1910, in the case of the "Osborne judgment"* or the Unemployed Bill,

* Mr. Osborne was a member of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. He brought an action against them for a declaration that the rule providing contribution for Parliamentary representation is invalid, and for an injunction to restrain the funds

he thought that he detected weakening in the ranks of the Labour party in their fight for these Bills, he noted it gravely.

His view that Labour should find its leaders in its own ranks was not shared by Chamberlain and others who initiated Labour legislation;* but Dilke's principle was to act as spokesman for Labour only so long as it stood in need of an interpreter; when the movement had attained stability and become articulate, his work as the advocate who had expressed its aspirations and compelled public attention for them was done.

His policy did not involve his silence on points in which he differed from the Labour party. In his first speech in the House of Commons in 1893, on the question of the destitute alien, he did not agree with some trade representatives, who would in those days have excluded aliens, in fear of their competition. His dissection of the figures on which the plea of exclusion was based showed that they were misleading, since emigration and immigration were not accurately compared. He maintained that protective legislation with regard to conditions and wages would deal with the danger from competition which the trades feared, and he pointed out that anti-alien legislation must strike at the root of that right of asylum which had always been a distinguishing feature of British policy.

He met the contention of those who wished for a Labour Ministry by pointing out that co-ordination and readjustment, not addition to the number of Ministers, was needed. The size of our Cabinets was responsible for many governmental weaknesses in a country where Ministers were already far more numerous than was the case in other great European countries; too numerous to be accommodated on the

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being used in this way. He was successful in the Court of Appeal and in the House of Lords (A.S. of R.S. *v.* Osborne, 1910, A.C., 87). This practically made it impossible for trade-unions to support the Labour party.

* April, 1893, letter to Dilke from Chamberlain: "A political leader having genuine sympathy with the working classes and a political programme could, in my opinion, afford to set them [Labour leaders] aside." Reference to this letter has been made also in Chapter XLIX., p. 288.

Treasury Bench, and with salaries which would almost have met the cost of payment of members.

From Labour developments everything was to be hoped, and nothing to be feared, in the interests of the State or community. The only danger which menaced the gradual and wise evolution of Labour was "an unsuccessful war." The danger to peaceful evolution from such a war would be great indeed. He warned those who advocated the settlement of international difficulties by arbitration, that this result could only be obtained when the workers of the different countries were in a position to arrive at settlement by this means. Till then we could not neglect any precaution for Imperial Defence.

Complete data are needed to carry out efficient work, and to Sir Charles's orderly mind the confusion of our Labour and other statistics, and the absence of correlation arising from their production by different departments, were a source of constant irritation. Both by question and speech in the House of Commons and as President of the Statistical Society he laboured to obtain inquiry into "this overlapping, to obtain co-ordination of statistics and the possibility of combining enforcement with economy under one department," instead of under three or four.*

Trade-unionism had by no means achieved "its perfected work," and outside the highly organized trades there was a vast unorganized mass of labour, largely that of women. The existence of such a body of workers undermined the Labour position, and of all Sir Charles's efforts to improve industrial conditions none is more noteworthy than that which was done by himself and Lady Dilke for women and children. His wife's work for the Women's Trade-Union League, to which are affiliated women's trade-unions (the League increased its membership from ten to seventy thousand during her lifetime),

* Sir Bernard Mallet, Registrar-General, gives an account of Sir Charles's work in this direction. See Appendix I. to this chapter.

brought him increasingly in touch with women's work; and, from his return to Parliament in 1892 to the end, scarcely a month in any Session passed without many questions being put by him in the House of Commons on points dealing with their needs. These questions tell in themselves a history of a long campaign; sometimes dealing with isolated cases of suffering, such as accident or death from ill-guarded machinery, or a miscarriage of justice through the hide-bound conservatism of some country bench; sometimes forming part of a long series of interrogatories, representing persistent pressure extending over many years, directed to increased inspection, to the enforcement of already existing legislation, or to the promotion of new. The results were shown not only by redress of individual hardships and by the general strengthening of administration, but by the higher standard reached in the various measures of protective legislation which were passed during his lifetime. Nearly every Bill for improving Labour conditions, for dealing with fines and deductions, for procuring compensation for accident, bore the stamp of his work.*

Characteristically he mustered for use every scrap of information available on a subject. Thus, he detected in the Employment of Children Act (1903) powers which neither the framers nor the promoters of the Act had

* As Minister he helped in measures far outside his department. Mr. W. J. Davis, father of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade-Union Congress, tells how once, at Dilke's own suggestion, he and Mr. Broadhurst came to see Sir Charles, then Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, about the Employers' Liability Bill and the Contracting-out Clause. "We spent an hour with him in the smoking-room," says Mr. Davis, "and left, Sir Charles having agreed to see the full Committee at 9.30 next morning. The House did not rise until 3 a.m., but Sir Charles was at our offices in Buckingham Street prompt to time. In the afternoon he met a few of us again, to consider an amendment for extending the time for the commencement of an action to six months instead of six weeks. This desirable alteration he succeeded in obtaining. When the Bill was passed—which, with all its faults, restored the workers' rights to compensation for life and limb—there was no member of the Government, even including the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt), from whom the Parliamentary Committee had received such valuable help as from the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs."

foreseen, and, by speech and question, pressed their use till these previously unknown powers of protection for children were exercised by the officials to the full. Equally characteristic was his fashion of utilizing his specialized knowledge of regulations in one department in order to drive home his point in another. Thus, having cited the case of a stunted child told off to carry loads amounting to 107 pounds, he was able to add the information that, "in regulating the weight to be lifted by blue-jackets in working quick-firing guns, the limit was put at 100 pounds."

His care for women workers was not confined to public advocacy; it showed itself in unostentatious and unremitting help to those who worked with him or came to him for advice. Such advice was not confined to large questions of policy: he spent himself as faithfully on the smallest points of detail which made for the efficiency of the work. His knowledge furnished "briefs" for that group of workers which his wife's care for the Women's Trade-Union League drew round them both, and it guided and inspired their campaign. He watched every publication of the League. However busy, he would find time to correct the proofs of articles brought to him, to dissect Blue-books and suggest new points; each quarter he read the review which was issued of the League's work.

The man who knows, and is ready to help, is early surrounded by clients. Tributes from the organizers and leaders of the great trades are as frequent as t e testimony to his help which came from workers in unorganized and sweated trades. The representative of a mining constituency in later years, his work for the miners was great, and repaid by their trust and support.* From a standpoint

* "During the whole of his Parliamentary life he was always ready and willing to help the miners, assist in preparing and drafting Mines Bills, regulations for increased safety in mines, and the eight hours. He was in charge of the Mines Regulation Amendment Bill, bringing it before the House every Session until the Government appointed a Royal Commission, and ultimately brought in a Bill which became an Act of Parliament. By his tact and influence he managed some years ago to get a short Bill passed raising the working age underground from twelve to thirteen," writes Mr. T. Ashton, secretary of the Miners' Federation.

which gives an estimate of all his Labour work come these words from Mr. Sidney Webb:

"He was an unfailing resource in every emergency. No one will ever know how much the Progressive Movement, in all its manifestations, owed to his counsel, his great knowledge, and his unsparing helpfulness. Trade-unionism among women as well as men; the movement for amending and extending factory legislation; the organization of the Labour forces in the House of Commons, are only some of the causes in which I have myself witnessed the extraordinary effectiveness which his participation added. There has probably been no other instance in which the workmen alike in the difficulties of trade-union organization and amid the complications of Parliamentary tactics have had constantly at their service the services of a man of so much knowledge and such extensive experience of men and affairs. But the quality that more than any other impressed me in Sir Charles Dilke as I knew him was his self-effacement. He seemed to have freed himself, not only from personal ambitions, but also from personal resentments and personal vanity. What was remarkable was that this 'selflessness' had in it no element of 'quietism.' He retained all the keenness of desire for reform, all the zest of intellectual striving, and all the optimism, of the enthusiast."

II.

That "true Imperialism" which Sir Charles advocated was never more clearly shown than in matters of Social Reform. His demand that we should learn from the example of our Colonies was dictated by his desire to promote the homogeneity of the Empire. He believed in developing our institutions according to the national genius, and he viewed, for example, with distrust the tendency to import into this country such schemes as that of contributory National Sickness Insurance on a German pattern. His attitude during the early debates on Old-Age Pensions helped to secure a non-contributory scheme. He laid, then as always, special stress on the position of those workers who never receive a living wage and already suffer

from heavy indirect taxation, holding that to take from such as these is to reduce still further their vitality and efficiency. During the debates on the Workmen's Compensation Act he urged the extension of the principle to out-workers and to all trades. The protection should be universal and compulsory.

In a speech of April 27th, 1907, he promised to "fight to the death any scheme of Old-Age Pensions based on thrift or on the workers' contributions." Later, when the proposals as to workmen's insurance were nebulous, but nevertheless pointed to a contributory scheme, he, criticizing some words of Mr. Haldane's, spoke his anxiety lest "to have a system for all labour, including the underpaid labour of unskilled women, based on contributions by the individual, might involve the difficulty expressly avoided by the Government in the case of pensions—namely, the use of public money to benefit the better-paid class of labour, inapplicable to the worst-paid class, but largely based on taxation which the latter paid." One of his last pencillings on the margin of an article reviewing the Government's forecast of the scheme for sickness insurance includes a note of regret and indignation at the apparent omission to make any special provision for the lowest-paid classes of workers.

One neglected class of Labour whose grievances he sought to remedy by a measure which has not yet reached fulfilment was that of the shop assistants. Year after year, from 1896, he spoke at their meetings, introduced their Bill in the House of Commons, urged its points, inspired its introduction in the Lords, till at last the Liberal Government, in 1909, introduced proposals embodying its main features. The question of the representation of the shop assistants on the Grand Committee when the Bill should reach that stage was discussed by him just five days before his death, and many attributed very largely to his absence the fact that the Government were obliged to permit mutilation of their proposals before they became law in 1911. The National Union of Shop Assistants have commemorated

his work for them by giving his name to their new head-quarter offices in London.

An amusing tribute to his legislative activities and the effect they produced on reactionaries is to be found in a speech by that famous "die-hard" of the individualist school, the late Lord Wemyss, who warned the House of Lords that their lordships should always scrutinize the measures that came from "another place," and "beware of Bills which bear on their backs the name of that great municipal Socialist, Sir Charles Dilke."

A minor but important characteristic of Sir Charles's views as an administrator was his conviction that wherever the interests of women and children are concerned the inspectorate should include an effective women's staff. The appointment of women inspectors for the Local Government Board made by him in 1883 was a pioneer experiment, which he vainly urged Sir William Harcourt to follow in the Home Department—a reform delayed till twelve years later, when Mr. Asquith as Home Secretary carried it out.

But his most important service to Labour in the direction of administration is connected with the Home Office Vote. Though Bills were closely followed by him in Committee, he refused to take part in any obstruction upon them, holding that "all obstruction is opposed to the interests of Radicalism, in the long-run." Acting on this view, he with others helped the Government to get votes in Supply. The true policy was, in his view, to obtain "ample opportunity for the discussion of important votes at those times of the Session when we desire to discuss them." So he dealt with Home Office administration on its industrial side. Some more marked and centralized criticism of the workings of this great department was necessary than that supplied by questions in Parliament, correspondence, and private interviews. The administration of the War Office, the conduct of Foreign Affairs, or of the Admiralty, claimed the attention of the House of Commons as the annual vote on the Estimates came

round. It was not so with the "Ministry of the Interior," and it was practically left to Sir Charles to create that annual debate on the Home Office Vote, which dealt with the industrial side of that department's administration. Year after year he reviewed its work, forcing into prominence the Chief Inspector's Report on Factories and Workshops; examining the orders, exemptions, exceptions, and regulations, by which the Home Office legislates under the head of administration, always with a view to the levelling up of industrial conditions and the promotion of a universal incidence of protection for the workers. "We can trust no one but Sir Charles Dilke in Parliament to understand the principles of factory legislation," wrote Mr. Sidney Webb in comment on some destructive Government proposals as to industrial law. This appreciation of the fundamental ideal underlying our legislative patchwork of eccentricities went hand in hand with a half-humorous and half-lenient understanding of his countrymen's attitude to such questions. "We passed Acts in advance of other nations," he said, "before we began to look for the doctrines that underlay our action, and long before we possessed the knowledge on which it was said to have been based." But for one afternoon in the year the attention of the House of Commons was intelligently focussed on the details of the suffering of those, the weakest workers of all, on whose shoulders the fabric of our industrial system rests. Matters left previously to the agitation of some voluntary society or to the pages of the "novel with a purpose" were marshalled according to their bearing on different administrative points, and discussed in orderly detail. The overwork of women and girls in factory or workshop; the injury to health and the risks that spring from employment in dangerous trades; poor wages further reduced by fines and deductions; the employment of children often sent to work at too early an age, to stagger under loads too heavy for them to bear; the liability to accident consequent on long hours of labour—these were the themes brought forward on the Home

Office Vote, not for rhetorical display, but as arguments tending to a practical conclusion, such as the inadequacy of inspection or the insufficient numbers of the available staff.

In the atmosphere thus created much progress was possible. Take, for example, one dangerous trade, that of the manufacture of china and earthenware, in which during the early nineties suffering which caused paralysis, blindness, and death, was frequent and acute. Speaking as late as 1898 on the Home Office Vote, and quoting from the official reports, Sir Charles showed that the cases for the whole country amounted to between four and five hundred out of the five to six thousand persons exposed to danger. Under his persistent pressure Committee after Committee inquired into this question and promulgated special rules; attention was focussed on the suffering, and this evil, though still unfortunately existing, abated both in numbers and acuteness, till at his death the cases had fallen to about a fifth of those notified in 1898.

His standpoint was one which raised industrial matters out of the arena of party fight, and on both sides of the House he found willing co-operators.

Help came not from the House of Commons alone. Lord James of Hereford, Lord Beauchamp, Lord Milner, lent their aid on different occasions, and Lord Lytton paid generous tribute to one "who was always ready to place his vast knowledge and experience, his energy and industry, at the service of any cause which has for its object the social well-being of the people of this country."

In Sir Charles's crowded day, the early luncheon at half-past twelve which allowed time for talk before the House met was often set aside for interviews. During the meal itself conversation for the greater part ranged wide, but towards the end he would turn to his guest with a demand for information on the point at issue, or, if his advice were needed, with an appeal for questions. The mass of information which he elicited was due to the simplicity of his

talk with all who came to him. "He asked me my views as if I were of his own standing," said the young secretary of the Anti-Sweating League after his first interview.*

The reformer does not generally count on the aid of representatives of the great Government departments, yet the independent and non-party attitude of Sir Charles and the friends who worked with him for Social Reform secured not only the attention of successive Ministers, but also the help of those permanent officials who finally came to do him honour at the dinner which commemorated the passing of the Trade Boards Act in 1910.

Conspicuous among the friends who worked with him in the House of Commons for the promotion of Social Reform in different directions were Mr. H. J. Tennant (afterwards Secretary for Scotland in Mr. Asquith's Coalition Government), Captain Norton (now Lord Rathcreedan),

* Apart from these scattered conversations, Sir Charles met the united representatives of trade-unionism once a year at the opening of Parliament, for then the Trade-Union Congress Parliamentary Committee lunched with him and talked over Labour questions at the House of Commons. This custom, which began in 1880 and lasted through Mr. Broadhurst's secretaryship, was resumed in 1898, and was continued to the end, and the meeting was fruitful of results. "These annual conversations," says Mr. Davis, "had much more to do with the policy of the legislative Labour party than could be understood by the party as a whole, but always the object was to aid the main aspirations of the Trade-Union Congress; indeed, from 1901 to 1906 the luncheons were followed by a conference of Labour and Radical members in one of the conference-rooms, where arrangements were made to support Labour Bills or to oppose reactionary proposals made by a reactionary Government. This would have continued, but in 1906 the larger Labour party returned to Parliament made it unnecessary."

The advent of the "larger Labour party," though it affected the conferences, did not affect the social meetings, which ceased only with Sir Charles Dilke's death. The last of these dinners was one at which the Parliamentary Committee in their turn entertained him, paying warm tribute to the years of help he had given to the trade-union movement. It was in the vacation, but there was a full attendance, all the provincial members of the Parliamentary Committee without exception coming up or staying in London for the dinner. One of his prized possessions in the after-months was the gold matchbox they gave him, inscribed with the badge of the Trade-Union Congress and the word "Labour." Round it were engraved his name and the date of the Parliamentary Committee's presentation.

Mr. Masterman, and Mr. J. W. Hills, member for Durham, a leader of the Social Reform group among the Conservatives. Mr. Hills's estimate of this side of Sir Charles's Parliamentary achievements may fitly be given here:

"Dilke's interest in Labour questions sprang not only from his sense of justice and sympathy with the unfortunate, but also from his clear and logical mind, which recognized that starvation, underpayment, and servile conditions are the negation of that democracy in which he believed for the United Kingdom and the Empire. For this reason he was the admitted champion of the coloured races; and he was the originator of a growing school of reformers of all countries, who realize that the nations of the world must advance together, for if one lags behind all suffer. He therefore took a most active interest in the International Association for Labour Legislation; he was the mainstay of the English branch, and he kept closely in touch with men like Dr. Bauer of Switzerland, M. Fontaine of France, and M. Vandervelde of Brussels, who were working on the same lines in other countries. Of the earlier and more difficult part of the work I saw nothing, for when I joined the association it had an assured position, and had behind it two great outstanding successes—the abolition of white phosphorus in the making of matches, and the regulation of nightwork for women. His knowledge of foreign countries, his familiarity with their industrial questions and modes of thought, and his facility in their languages, gave him, by common consent, a position such as no one holds now. The work has been little recognized in England; our Government, unlike foreign Governments, was slow to give help to the association, and it was only Dilke's unbounded energy that compelled them to support this important and hopeful movement.

"What struck me about his position in domestic Labour questions was that his support or opposition was always the dominating fact of the situation. What his relations were with Labour I do not know—he never talked about it; but I have no doubt that he was their counsellor and adviser throughout their history.

"Dilke had a deeper hold on Labour than his knowledge and ability alone would have given him. He held their hearts and affection as well. They looked upon him as the one man who had always stood up for the workers, through

bad and good report, whether they had votes or had not. He had championed their cause when they were voiceless, when it had little support in Parliament and gave little advantage at elections. Nowadays such championship is both easy and profitable, but that was by no means the case in the sixties and seventies. It was exceedingly unpopular, and out of touch with the political philosophy of all except a few. I was greatly struck with this at the dinner given to Dilke in 1910 to celebrate the passing of the Trade Boards Act. I realized that many had come there to do honour to the one man who had always fought for them. They knew that so long as he was alive there was someone who would support them, regardless of consequences.

* * * * *

"Of his activities in Parliament, I remember most vividly those in which I was personally concerned. In two such cases I was on the opposite side; in two I worked with him. The Trade Disputes Act of 1906 was in reality carried by Dilke and Shackleton, for the Government were hopelessly compromised by the two voices with which nearly all their leaders had spoken. Again in 1907, when I was trying to plead for Preferential Trade, he marshalled against it all the force of his wide knowledge and ripe experience.

"On the other hand, in 1909 the luck of the ballot enabled me to bring in a private member's Bill, and I introduced Dilke's Sweated Industries Bill. Dilke was to second it. When the Bill came on I was laid up with influenza, but I was determined to go to the House, and got out of bed to do so, though when I got there I was only capable of a few sentences and had to return to bed. But the effect of the introduction of Dilke's Bill was to stir up the Government, so much so that a few days later Winston Churchill introduced his Bill, which, being a Government Bill, took precedence of ours and became law as the Trade Boards Act. In 1910 again, on the Home Office Vote, an occasion on which Dilke always made a masterly review of the industrial history of the year, he asked me to second him, and to deal particularly with lead-poisoning in the Potteries. He always tried to detach Labour questions from party. It was entirely owing to him that I took an interest in the subject.

"I never actually worked with him, but I should imagine

that he worked at a pace that few could follow. He was wonderful at mastering facts, and he had the instinct of knowing what facts were important. His method must have been somewhat unconventional, for not only did he tear the heart out of a book, but he frequently tore pages out as well. He had got what he wanted, and the rest was waste paper."

III.

The testimony of Mr. Hills has touched on several objects for which Sir Charles worked till his death, but of these one upon which he struggled to establish an international understanding—that of the minimum wage—claims a fuller consideration. The interdependence of Labour was always apparent to him, and under the sympathy for suffering which inspired his action on such questions as the native races or the treatment of the alien Jew, there lay the sense that the degradation of any class of labour in one country affected its status in all, and that to be insular on industrial questions was to undermine everything that the pioneers of English Labour had fought for and achieved.

The wages of many workers were left untouched by the imperfect development of trade-unionism. Sweating was the result. To check this evil, machinery must be created by legislation to deal with low wages, while international understanding was essential here, as in other questions of Social Reform, to enable the democracies of the various countries to keep abreast.

The question of the minimum wage had occupied Sir Charles Dilke's attention from the days of his discipleship to John Stuart Mill. He had been much impressed by the debates which took place during his presidency in 1885 at the Conference on Industrial Remuneration. A few years later he had been present at a meeting convened by the Women's Trade-Union League during the Trade-Union Congress at Glasgow, and the impression made on him by that meeting he thus described:

"I had long been used to Labour meetings, but was then brought face to face with hopeless difficulties, heart-breaking to the organizer, because of a rooted disbelief among the workers in the possibility of improvement. There is a stage in which there is hope—hope for the improvement of wages and of conditions, possibly to be won by combined effort. There is a stage, familiar in the East End of London, when there is no hope for anything, except, perhaps, a hired feather and the off-chance of an outing. Yet even the roughest trades employing women and children in factories or large workshops, to be found in the East End or in the outskirts of Glasgow, have in them the remote possibility of organization. Home industries in many cases have not even that bare chance. There is in them a misery which depresses both the workers and those who would help them. The home life of the poorest class of factory workers is not much, but it means, nevertheless, a great deal to them. The home life of the home worker is often nothing. The home becomes the grinding shop. Factory slavery finds a refuge even in a hard home. 'Home' slavery has none. . . . It is in this class, utterly incapable of fixing a minimum wage for itself, that the evil of its absence stands revealed in its worst form."

Turning, as was his custom, to our colonies for successful experime and example, he discussed with Mr. Deakin (the [illegible]orian Minister of whom he prophesied in 1887 that [illegible]e would be the First Prime Minister of that federated Australia which was then called "Deakin's Dream") the example of a Wages Board which was being introduced in Victoria. An Anti-Sweating League had been formed in 1893 in Victoria, and had adopted this scheme, carrying it into law in 1895. The vital part of the scheme was the creation of Conciliation Boards on which representatives of employers and employed were represented—Boards which should discuss wages and fix a minimum rate in the trade concerned.

As opposed to any larger scheme of conciliation for all trades, this plan had to Sir Charles's mind certain marked advantages: it would not interfere with the activities of the great trade-unions which already stood possessed of similar voluntary machinery, while its application only

to those whose depressed and miserable condition invoked public sympathy would create an atmosphere likely to induce successful and harmonious development.

In 1898 he introduced his Wages Boards Bill, from that time annually laid before Parliament; but it made no progress, and there were moments when even his optimism almost failed. It was not till 1906, when a Sweated Industries Exhibition was organized by the *Daily News*, that a step forward was made. The sight of the workers, engaged in their ill-remunerated toil, brought home to the public an evil till then too little realized. The movement was international. A similar exhibition in Berlin had already been held, and others now followed in America, in Continental countries, in Scotland, and in various parts of England. In this country a National Anti-Sweating League came into existence. A great meeting of trade-unionists and Labour representatives was held at the Guildhall, Sir Charles Dilke presiding on the first day, and the question of the minimum wage was debated by Labour; Sir George Askwith, Mr. Sidney Webb, and Mr. W. P. Reeves, with other Colonial representatives, speaking from the platform. Many conferences followed, and M. Vandervelde came from Belgium, M. Arthur Fontaine from France, to combat insular and Tariff Reform arguments, and to point out that the movement was not confined to our own shores. A great deputation representative of every shade of political opinion, introduced by Sir Charles Dilke and the Archbishop of Canterbury, waited on the Prime Minister on December 4th, 1908, and laid their views before him. Sir Charles put the Bill into the hands of the Labour party in Parliament. A Committee of the House was appointed to consider the question of home work and the proposed measure, and, after the stages which Mr. Hills has described, it became law as the Trade Boards Act in 1909. The Act at first applied to only four trades, but there have been several additions. Of the first extension made after Sir Charles's death, and of the probability of the adoption of the scheme by other countries, Sir George Askwith wrote: "It will be the first stone on

Sir Charles's cairn. I can see them all coming up the hill, nation by nation."*

On April 14th, 1910, there followed the dinner to celebrate the passing into law of his favourite project, and at that dinner, under the presidency of Dr. Gore, then Bishop of Birmingham, representatives of Liberalism, Labour, and Conservatism met to do Sir Charles honour. There were many tributes paid to one whom Mr. Will Crooks dubbed

* France, the first nation to reach the hill-top, passed her Minimum Wage Act for home workers in 1915.

Minimum rates of wages under the Trade Boards Act were in operation in Great Britain (February, 1915) as follows:

	Female Persons over 18 *per Week of* 52 *Hours.*	
	Per Hour.	Per Week.
Ready-made and wholesale bespoke tailoring, and shirt-making	3½d.	15s. 2d.
Chain-making	2¾d.	11s. 11d.
Paper-box-making	3¼d.	14s. 1d.
Lace-finishing	2¾d.	11s. 11d.
Sugar confectionery and food-preserving	3d.	13s. 0d.
Tin-box-making	3¼d.	14s. 1d.
Metal hollow-ware	3d.	13s. 0d.

It is to be noted that these rates of wages, which are in every case much higher than those they supplanted, were fixed before or in the early part of the War, and owe nothing to the general inflation of earnings which took place at a later stage. From the figures of the Board of Trade Enquiry into Earnings and Hours of Labour, published in 1909, it appears that about one-third of the women employed in factories and workshops were at the time of the Enquiry in receipt of wages of less than 10s. per week, and the minimum rates above mentioned must be considered in relation to these, and not to later figures.

In the various trades, shirt-making and lace-finishing excepted, minimum rates of wages have also been fixed for adult male persons. These rates before the War were, save in one case, 6d. per hour or upwards, and probably one-quarter of the adult male workers in the trades benefited by them.

The relief given by the Boards to groups of particularly ill-paid women, such as the chain-makers, the matchbox-makers in East London, and the lace-finishers, has been the subject of many articles in the Press.

In the chain-making trade, where the Board affected both wives and husbands, the family income increased, in many cases, by 15s. and upwards per week. The bearing of these higher rates of wages on the food and clothing of those who received them, the physical condition of the school-children, and personal and social habits, forms part of the story which Mr. R. H. Tawney tells in *Minimum Rates in the Chain-making Trade.*

"the greatest of anti-sweaters," and of them the happiest was, probably, that of Dr. Gore:

"Sir Charles has played a great part publicly. In finding out, however, what has been going on behind the scenes, I am led to know that, great as has been the public part, there is a greater part Sir Charles has played in that region which the newspapers do not penetrate—the region where important decisions are hatched and matured, and differences made up, before appearances are made in public. His zeal has been unquenchable and consistent."

After Sir Charles's death, the same friend described his knowledge as "supreme and incomparable in all matters relating to industries and industrial law, transcending that of any of his contemporaries."

Sir Charles Dilke's nature led him to discount personal tributes, and his verdict on the triumph of the minimum-wage principle is best summed up in the words of Renan which he sent to one who worked with him: "C'est ainsi qu'il se fait que le vrai, quoique n'étant compris que d'un très petit nombre, surnage toujours, et finit par l'emporter."

There is no part of his work which brings out more the quality of "self-effacement" to which Mr. Sidney Webb alludes. The cause of Labour is not even yet a popular one, and there are many who held and hold that his interest in it was not calculated to strengthen the political position of one to whom men looked as a military expert, or an authority on foreign affairs. But to him a grasp of social questions and a full recognition of the place which Labour should hold in the modern State were essential parts of a statesman's equipment, and appeals on the ground of a weakening of his position by his unremitting care for Labour interests could not have a feather's weight in the balance for one in whom the chord of self had long since been struck and passed in music out of sight.

APPENDIX I

STATISTICS BY SIR BERNARD MALLET, REGISTRAR-GENERAL

In 1907 Sir Charles Dilke, who had been a member of the Royal Statistical Society since 1866, accepted an invitation to become its President, in which capacity he served for two years, with notable advantage to the society. As the writer of the notice which appeared in the journal on the occasion of his death observed:

"While Sir Charles Dilke would have declined the title of statistician, and, indeed, frequently referred to himself as a 'mere user' of statistics, he possessed in a high degree what may be termed the statistical instinct. His genius for marshalling facts in orderly sequence, his passion for precision of statement even in minute detail, his accurate recollection of figures, as, indeed, of everything which he stored in the chamber of his encyclopædic memory, are all primary attributes of the ideal statistician, though in his case the wide range and magnitude of the subjects in which he was interested led far beyond the field of statistical investigation."*

His assumption of this office was thus specially appropriate on general grounds; but it was connected in his mind, as he more than once explained, with certain definite and practical objects. He had been impressed, during his chairmanship of the Income Tax Committee, with the inadequacy of the published statistics on finance, and he hoped to signalize his period of office by the promotion of the better organization of Government statistics. He chose this subject, accordingly, for the presidential address which he delivered before the society in December, 1907,† and which Mr. Arthur Bowley, in his address to the society in furtherance of the same crusade a few months later, described as a "terrible indictment" of the existing system, or want of system. To a large extent this address consisted of illustrations of the lack of co-ordination in the collection and issue of these statistics, and the difficulties which confronted the student who desired to make use of them. But he did not confine himself to criticism. Although no definite scheme for dealing with this large and difficult matter could be usefully put forward without a searching official inquiry, Sir Charles was willing to support any proposal which would assist the object in view, from the institution of an advisory or consultative committee of expert statisticians, to that of a central statistical bureau on the Continental model. He induced the council to enlarge the scope of the society's Census Committee,

* *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, February, 1911, p. 320.
† *Ibid.*, December, 1907, pp. 553-582.

then sitting to advise on measures to improve the census to be taken in 1911, so as to include official statistics generally; and he persuaded the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Publications to hear evidence on the subject.* He secured the consideration of his suggestions in several official quarters, and his criticisms undoubtedly led to some improvements in detail. It would have been a miracle if Sir Charles Dilke's vigorous campaign had attained a more obvious measure of success, and he himself was well aware of the extreme difficulty of securing attention in this country to a mere question of administrative reform as distinguished from one of political or party interest—a question, moreover, which aroused many departmental susceptibilities. But it would be a mistake to ignore the utility of such efforts as his in stimulating interest in the subject and assisting those whose labours have resulted in material improvements in recent years.

Never had the society enjoyed the advantage of a President who took so much interest in its proceedings. He regularly attended the meetings of the committees. He was almost invariably in the chair at the society's meetings, and rarely failed to add to the interest of the discussion by some illuminating comment, and he was the life and soul of the dinners of the Statistical Club which followed the meetings.

It is difficult to exaggerate the encouragement which a President of Sir Charles Dilke's distinction can give in these various ways to workers in the unpopular and unattractive paths of statistical science.

APPENDIX II

By Miss Mary Macarthur

The Taff Vale decision struck a vital blow at trade-union organization, and while the case was still finally undecided the leaders of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants called on Sir Charles for advice. Afterwards, when the judgment was upheld, his services were unreservedly at the command of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade-Union Congress.

He assisted the committee in 1901 at a conference in which Mr. Asquith, Sir Robert Reid, and Mr. Haldane, committed the Liberal party to the initiation of legislation to reverse the Taff Vale decision, and shortly afterwards played a similar part in an interview with Lord James of Hereford and the late Lord Ritchie, who spoke as representing the then Government. The second conference was also satisfactory, since it drew from Lord James the emphatic opinion that workmen on strike

* *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, September, 1908, p. 459.

were entitled in their own interest to use moral suasion to prevent their places being taken by others.

The Tory party did not, however, take Lord James's view, and a resolution proposing the restoration of the *status quo* before the Taff Vale judgment was defeated in the House of Commons by a majority of 29. In May, 1903, a Bill introduced by Mr. D. J. Shackleton to legalize picketing shared the same fate; while an even more ominous event was the appointment by the Government of a Royal Commission on which Labour was unrepresented, and before which the leaders of the trade-union movement refused to appear.

Arguments in favour of compromise were put forward at the Trade-Union Congress of 1903, which followed closely on the rejection of Mr. Shackleton's Bill, and during the next three years the position of the unions became continuously more precarious. It looked as though trade-unions were beginning, in the phrase of Mr. Bell, to "exist very much on sufferance."

In this crisis Sir Charles was an inexhaustible source of strength. On everyone he could reach and influence he pressed the policy of standing firm, and the continuing reverses of the Tory party at by-elections played into his hands.

The Tories accepted the decision of their constituents to the extent that Mr. Shackleton's Bill, rejected in 1903, obtained second reading by 39 votes in 1904, and by 122 in 1905. But dislike of the measure had not abated; so many vexatious amendments were embodied in the Bill in Committee as to render it worse than useless; and at last all but the Tory members retired from the Grand Committee in disgust, and the Bill was discharged from the House. But in 1906 came the General Election, by which the Labour party found itself abruptly in the enjoyment of prominence and power.

Faced with responsibility for legislation, the Liberal Government abated something of their pre-election zeal, and introduced a measure which would have given only conditional immunity to the trade-unions; but an indignant Labour party, having secured a majority of 300 for a thoroughgoing measure of their own, were prepared to oppose the Bill of the Government, and this Bill was remodelled on Labour party lines.

The result was seen by everyone, but very few people understood how at every stage the member for the Forest of Dean had intervened, using to the utmost his powerful influence in the one camp to fix the trade-unionists in their demand for complete reversal of the Taff Vale judgment and the prevention of its recurrence, and in the other to bring about an unequivocal acceptance of the demand.*

* The Trade Disputes Act, 1906, got rid of the Taff Vale decision by Section 4. It also legalized peaceful picketing (Section 2), and made certain acts done in furtherance of a trade dispute not action-

Nor after this major issue was settled triumphantly did his anxiety and watchfulness abate. He scrutinized the provisions of the Bill with jealous care. He desired to exclude every ambiguous word. "Too easily satisfied," he scribbled to me after Labour members had neglected to press an amendment he considered of importance, and as the Bill slowly moved forward several such criticisms came into my hands.

His own work in Committee on the Bill is indicated by his summary of the risks confronting those who took part in trade disputes:

1. The liability to be hit in respect of molestation.
2. Under the word "reasonable."
3. Under the Law of Nuisance.

The first danger he diminished in an amendment accepted by the Government. The second he tried to lessen by moving the omission of the words "peaceably and in a reasonable manner." Unsuccessfully, for his Labour colleagues inclined to think him extreme, and intimated their consent to retain "peaceably."

On the third question he was supported by almost half the Committee, and only failed to carry his amendment against the Government through a dictum of the then Attorney-General, that the Law of Nuisance could not be invoked to stop picketing. This law has, however, since been invoked against the pickets of the Hotel, Club, and Restaurant Workers' Union, and under it several members of the union have been fined, and one or two committed to gaol. The instance is a final proof, if one were needed, of Sir Charles's prescience. The fame of Sir Charles Dilke in the realm of industrial legislation will mount high, but to trade-unionists nothing will endear his memory more than the knowledge that, if and in so far as they have now a charter invulnerable alike to the prejudice and the caprice of those who administer the law, it is largely due to the clear vision of Sir Charles Dilke, and to the skill and invincible courage with which he followed his aims.

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able on the ground merely that they interfered with business (Section 4). Its sections dealt with the following subjects:

Section 1 amended the law of conspiracy.

Section 2 made peaceful picketing legal.

Section 3: "An act done by a person in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute shall not be actionable on the ground only that it is an interference with the trade, business, or employment, of some other person, or with the right of some other person to dispose of his capital or his labour as he wills."

Section 4: "An action against a trade-union, whether of workmen or masters, or against any members or officials thereof, on behalf of themselves and all other members of the trade-union, in respect of any tortious act alleged to have been committed by or on behalf of the trade-union, shall not be entertained by any court."

CHAPTER LIII

WORK FOR NATIVE RACES

1870–1911

I.

Perhaps no one of Sir Charles Dilke's eager activities won for him more public and private affection and regard than the part which he took both in and out of Parliament as a defender of the weaker races against European oppression.

At the very outset of his career, John Stuart Mill's admiring sympathy for the youthful author of *Greater Britain* was specially called forth by chapters which made a natural appeal to the son of the historian of British India. More than twenty years later, Sir Charles, revising his work in the full maturity of his power and knowledge, emphasized again the first precept of his policy, which enjoined not only justice, but courtesy:

"Above all it is essential to the continuation of our rule under the changed conditions that the individual Englishman in India should behave towards the people as the best behave at present."

Into the question whether India would be better or worse off under some other system he never entered; British control was accepted by him as a fact; but, so accepting it, he insisted that justice should be done to the Crown's Asiatic subjects.

"Men who speak better English than most Englishmen; who conduct able newspapers in our tongue; who form the majority on town councils which admirably supervise the affairs of great cities; who, as Native Judges, have reached the highest judicial posts; who occupy seats in the Provin-

cial, the Presidency, and the Viceregal Councils, or as powerful Ministers excellently rule vast Native States, can no longer be treated as hopelessly inferior to ourselves in governmental power. These men look upon the Queen's proclamations as their charters, and point out that, while there is no legal reason against their filling some proportion, at all events, of the highest executive posts, there are as a fact virtually no natives high up in the covenanted Civil Service."

Control of the military power, control of the Budget, must remain with the governing race. But "provided war and finance are in those single hands, autocratic or despotic if you will, which must exist for India as a whole, in the absence of any other authority, the less we interfere in the details of administration, to my mind, the better both for India and for ourselves."*

Local self-government would give to the leading natives more opportunity for a career, and to the governed a rule more closely in touch with their sympathies and traditions. But there could be no general formula. "Roughly speaking," he said, "my views are hostile to the treating of India as a single State, and favourable to a legislative recognition of the diversity of conditions which undoubtedly exist in India." He contemplated administration in some parts of India by hereditary chiefs and princes, in some cities by elective representatives of the municipalities, in other portions of the country by a mixed system. But, by whatever method, he was for recognizing the fact that in India we were at many points controlling a developed though a different civilization; that trained men were to be had in numbers; and that the educated natives' claim for an increased and increasing part in the task of government must be recognized.

There is a letter from him to Mr. Morley in 1897, when he thought that freedom for the Indian Press was threatened by "blind reaction" after the Poona murder: "The state of things in Poona has grown out of the Committee, under the

* *East and West*, November, 1901.

man who was stabbed but is not dead, employing British privates (instead of employing native troops, as did General Gatacre at Bombay) to search the houses for plague patients." The whole position appeared to him "more dangerous than it has been at any time since the recall of Lytton in 1880."

A policy of repression would set back the progress of liberalizing Indian government. No one insisted more strongly on the maintenance of sufficient force to defend the Indian Empire; but he believed that there was a second "greatest duty" in learning "how to live with the development of that new India which we ourselves have created."

Speaking on July 13th, 1909, when the murder of Mr. A. M. T. Jackson at Nasik was fresh in all minds, he urged continued "measures of amnesty and appeasement," and deprecated the policy of deporting leading members of the National Congress. "If reform was dangerous," he said, "it was less dangerous than leaving things alone." Describing Lord Ripon, whose death had only just taken place, as "the Viceroy who more than any other had touched the imagination of the people of India," he added: "If our rule, excellent in intention, but rather wooden, is to be made acceptable, imagination must play its part."

This lifelong advocacy of generous principles was not unrecognized. In the last autumn of his life he was pressed in flattering terms to attend the twenty-fifth National Congress; and for some time he entertained the idea, which was specially urged on him by his friend and honorary agent for the Forest of Dean, Sir William Wedderburn, who was presiding over the Congress that year.

The project was finally set aside in view of the momentous autumn session of 1910; but he did not feel equal to the journey. When the end came, India mourned for him.

II.

Sir Charles Dilke's concern with the vast network of problems arising throughout Africa and the Pacific Islands from the contact of white men with natives was infinitely detailed; yet more and more it tended to reduce itself to one broad issue. In this relation the coloured man is everywhere the white man's labourer; Dilke's object was to insure that he should not be his slave. Against actual slavery he was always a crusader, and for long years he contended against the recognition of it implied by the practice of restoring runaway slaves in Zanzibar. Under a Liberal Government, he carried his point at last. A letter written on August 17th, 1907, fitly sums up this matter:

"Dear Sir Charles Dilke,

"I have just heard, on arriving here, that the announcement has been made in the House of Commons of the intention of the Government to abolish the legal status of slavery in Mombasa and the Coast District on October 1st. I can hardly say how much pleasure this has given me, nor can I refrain from writing to say how much we out here are indebted to you for the part you have taken in bringing the Government to this decision. I feel that without your assistance the affair would have dragged on, possibly, for years. With many and grateful thanks,

"Believe me, yours very sincerely,

"Alfred R. Tucker,

"*Bishop of Uganda.*"

To Sir Charles men turned if protest had to be made against the illegal flogging of natives, or against those punitive expeditions which under a Liberal Government were often called military patrols.

As early as 1870 he had become a correspondent of the Aborigines' Protection Society; in 1871 he supported their action in defence of the Demerara negroes; and to the end of his life he was in constant communication with their leading men.

His brief tenure of office gave him power to put in force

principles for which he had contended as a private member. In 1877 he wrote to Mr. Chesson that since 1868 he had been interested to secure fair treatment for China,* but China's friends must bring pressure to bear to limit the use of torture. In 1880, having become Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, he was able to inform the same correspondent that he had "succeeded in making it certain that a strong direction would be made on the subject of Chinese torture."

Cases of gross barbarity, cases of actual slave trading, always found him ready to act, but his great object was to check the growth of all systems and institutions which made for industrial servitude—to his mind a graver peril than direct slavery. Thus, in 1878 he was in correspondence with the Aborigines' Protection Society concerning the proposed establishment of a Chartered Company in Borneo, and observed that such arrangements could not be justified by proving the existence of bad government in independent Native States. "The worse the government of these States, the greater the difficulties which crop up when we intermeddle." In 1881 as a Minister he resisted the grant of that charter. All these surrenders of territory and jurisdiction to commercial associations filled him with suspicion. He knew that expedients lay ready to the white man's hand by which the native population could easily be enslaved; and to these even the best representatives of direct colonial government under the Crown were prone to resort. In 1878 he had written anxiously to Mr. Chesson concerning the labour tax in Fiji, which, although instituted by a Governor in whom the society had special trust, seemed "opposed to all the principles for which you have hitherto contended." Nearly twenty years later he was maintaining this vigilance. "I am always uneasy about Fiji," he wrote

* In 1869 Sir Charles wrote letters to the *Times* on Chinese affairs, which, says the Memoir, 'possess a certain interest as showing that I held the same views as to China which I have always continued to have at heart,' and which may be sufficiently illustrated by quotation of a single phrase. He condemned "the old, bad, world-wide party . . . which never admits that weak races have rights as against the strong."

to Mr. Fox Bourne in August, 1896. "I attacked the labour system when it was instituted, and continue to hold the strongest opinion against it." But by that time the new developments which he had resisted in the seventies had spread fast and far.

"The fashion of the day," he wrote in September, 1895, "sets so strongly towards veiled slavery that there is nothing now to be done by deputation to Ministers. We ought to appeal to the conscience of the electorate, and I am willing greatly to increase my little gifts to your society if that is done."

Part of his concern was engendered by the revelation, then recent, that the Chartered Niger Company imposed by contract a fine of £1,000 on any agent or ex-agent of theirs who should publish any statement respecting the company's methods, even after his employment was ended. "I am convinced," Sir Charles wrote, "that the secrecy which it has been attempted to maintain puts them wholly in the wrong, even if they are angels;" and upon this ground he kept up a steady campaign against the Niger Company by question and debate in Parliament until Government bought the company out and assumed direct responsibility for the country.

South Africa was a graver centre of disquietude, for there commercial enterprise was on a greater scale. He wrote in December, 1900, after Great Britain had occupied the Transvaal: "My point is that the Rand Jews have already got slavery, and our Government must repeal the laws they have. Reading together the Pass Law and the coloured labour clause, which you will find was the end of the latest Gold Law, we have slavery by law."

The remedy lay, for him, in the guarantee of citizenship, at least in some degree, to this class of labour; and with that object he put himself at the centre of a concerted movement as soon as opportunity offered. When, after the Boer War, the mine owners returned to the Rand, and, pleading shortage of Kaffir labour, demanded the introduction of indentured Chinese coolies, Sir Charles vigorously protested. The

question played a considerable part in the elections which returned the Liberals to power with an enormous majority. It was not, however, as the party man that Sir Charles made his protest, but as the upholder of human rights. He feared lest "South Africa is to become the home of a great proletariat, forbidden by law to rise above the present situation."

When the Union of South Africa was proposed, it became manifest that division existed as to the status of non-European citizens. In 1906, when the Liberals came into power, immediate action was taken by a small group of members, who addressed a letter to the Prime Minister begging that, in view of the contemplated federation, steps should be taken to safeguard such political rights as natives actually enjoyed in the various colonies, and also the tribal institutions of separate native communities. The letter advocated also an extension of Native Reserves, and it was promptly followed (on February 28th) by a motion, brought forward by Mr. Byles, which declared that "in any settlement of South African affairs this House desires a recognition of Imperial responsibility for the protection of all races excluded from equal political rights, the safeguarding of all immigrants against servile conditions of labour, and the guarantee to the native populations of at least their existing status, with the unbroken possession of their liberties in Basutoland, Bechuanaland, and other tribal countries and reservations."

Sir Charles himself took no part in the debate; but he notes: 'I am proud to have planned this letter and drawn the motion for Byles so that it was carried unanimously by the House.' A resolution much stronger in terms could easily have been carried in that Parliament; but it would not have been unanimous, and it could hardly have been enforced later on. Here a principle was so firmly laid down that the House could not recede from it; and the importance of the step soon became apparent. When the Bill for the South African Union came before Parliament in 1909, Colonel Seely, who had been one of the signatories to the letter

of 1906, represented the Colonial Office in the Commons; and Sir Charles, warned by friends of the natives in South Africa, questioned him as to whether the Bill as drafted empowered the self-governing colonies to alter the existing boundaries of the Protectorates. He received a private promise that the matter should be put beyond doubt; and this was done in the Committee stage by a solemn declaration that the Imperial Government absolutely reserved its right of veto upon the alienation of native lands. As soon as the text of the proposed Constitution became known, he raised his protest against what he considered a permanent disfranchisement of labour; for labour in South Africa, he held, must for all time be coloured labour. Six weeks later, when the Bill was brought to Westminster, Mr. W. P. Schreiner, who came specially to plead the rights of the civilized men of colour, was in constant intercourse with Sir Charles, and scores of letters on detailed proposals for amendment attest the thoroughness of that co-operation. Dilke, with the support of some Labour men and Radicals, fought strenuously against the clauses which recognized a colour-bar, and in the opinion of some at least in South Africa, the essence of the position was secured.*

Sir Charles, always a strong advocate of colonial autonomy, nevertheless did not go to extreme lengths in this doctrine. An Imperialist first, he was fully prepared to say

* Mr. Drew, editor of the *Transvaal Leader*, wrote:

"I am truly glad that (if my view of the somewhat vague cablegram is correct) you have alienation of native lands reserved everywhere in South Africa. This provision, together with the entrenchment of the Cape Franchise, will form a solution of the question not unfavourable to the natives. It gives the natives and their friends something to bargain with. If the Cape Franchise should ever go, its place will be taken by something which will benefit all the natives and be acceptable to all."

From a different quarter came even stronger expression of gratitude. M. Jacottet, of the Swiss Mission, wrote:

"I beg on behalf of all my fellow-missionaries in Basutoland, as well as of all the friends of justice and liberty in this territory, to thank you most sincerely for your courageous and strong advocacy of the rights and interests of Basutoland and the other territories. All thoughtful and civilized Basutos know how much they are indebted to you, and your name is held in reverence by them."

to the colonies, So long as you claim Imperial protection, you must recognize the full rights of citizenship within the Empire. He feared gravely the tendencies which might develop under the British flag, if uncontrolled liberty of action were given to the Colonial Parliaments in dealing with such questions as forced labour. "The Australian rule in New Guinea is going to be terrible," is a stray note on one of his communications with the Aborigines' Protection Society.

This labour question was to him essentially the problem of the future, and he watched its developments with ceaseless anxiety. At the annual meeting of the society in April, 1910, he spoke of the energy which the Colonial Office displayed in promoting the growing of cotton as laudable but dangerous. "The chiefs had sometimes exercised compulsion to make their tribes cultivate the unfamiliar product." More generally he felt that wherever the white man introduced taxation there would be a tendency to requisition labour, and that all such projects would inevitably generate an interested commercial support. The Portuguese system of recruiting for the cocoa plantations might be barbarous; but if it were pleaded in defence that without it the supply of cocoa must fail, Sir Charles foresaw the gravest difficulties with the House of Commons. "How are we to make that 'would-be' practical Assembly tell the Government to induce Portugal to put an end to so enormous a cultivation?" The only method of avoiding these evils was to prevent their growth; and the soundest plan was to insure that the natives retained their own familiar means of livelihood, and so could not be brought down to the choice between starvation and selling their labour in a restricted market. For that reason he fiercely opposed the whole policy of concessions, and by public and private representations he pressed the Colonial Office to reject every such alienation of native rights in the land.

He had promised to read a paper on Indentured and Forced Labour at the Native Races Conference held in July, 1911. It reviewed all the facts of the situation as they

existed—the growing demand for indentured service, the respective record of the European Powers, and the varying results produced by varying methods which the same Power has adopted in different regions. It was, he thought, not easy to decide whether the anti-slavery cause had lost or gained ground in his lifetime; new insidious and widespread forms of the evil had taken a hold. Great Britain's escutcheon was marred by the inclusion of a colour-bar in the most recent Constitution of her oversea dominions; and the Government of India had recently failed to obtain from some British States that measure of rights for emigrating British Indian subjects which it had formerly been able to secure. Forced labour was being employed under British auspices in Egypt; while the French, who had "more nearly than any other nation" done away with this evil in colonies, were open to grave reproach in the matter of concessions—especially in that region where French administration was affected by the neighbouring example of the Congo Free State. The danger both of forced labour and of concessions was that they alike tended to destroy native law and tribal custom, and so to create 'one universal black proletariat'—a vast reservoir of cheap defenceless labour.

What he wrote was duly read at the Conference, and is included in the volume of their proceedings called *Inter-Racial Problems*. But before the Conference took place, silence had been imposed for ever on this advocate of equal justice. Among his papers is the manuscript of this composition corrected for the press by him within a week of his death—work done against the entreaty of those who cared for him, but work that he would not leave undone.

In defending the interest of the native races, Dilke always felt himself to be defending the dignity and the safety of labour at home—even though the representatives of European labour did not recognize the common concern. He was defending labour where it was weakest; and it is in his championship of the weak that one of the younger men who worked with him and learnt from him sees the characteristic note of his life. General Seely writes:

"To many of the younger men who found themselves in the Parliament of 1900 Dilke was an enigma. We could all appreciate his immense store of knowledge, his untiring industry, his courtesy to younger men, and his striking personality. But what the real purpose was to which he was devoting these talents, what was the end in view—put shortly, 'what he was at'—was to us a puzzle.

"Clearly, it was no bitter hostility either to a Government with which as a Radical he profoundly disagreed, or to an Opposition amongst whom he sat, but whose chiefs had not restored him to their inner councils. Not the former, for in matters of foreign policy and in Imperial Defence, where his unrivalled knowledge gave him powerful weapons of attack, he never pursued an advantage he had gained beyond very moderate limits. Not the second, for no man was more steadfast in his attendance and in his support, given by speech and in the lobby, to those of his own political faith.

"Still less was it personal ambition or self-seeking; for if he spoke often, it was only to put forward some definite point of view, and not for the purpose of taking part in a debate just because the House was crowded and the occasion important.

"Least of all was his constant attendance in the House of Commons the refuge of a man with no other object in life, for no man was more many-sided or had so many and such varied interests.

"His Parliamentary action was often baffling to the observer, especially in its restraint. It was only after many years that the present writer found the master-key to Dilke's actions, and it was revealed in a flash at the time of the passing of the South Africa Union Act. The question was the representation of the native population in the Union, and the cognate questions of their treatment and status. Dilke came to see me. He pleaded the native cause with earnestness, with eloquence, with passion. The man was transfigured as the emotions of pity and love of justice swept over him. No record could be kept of what he said; there could have been no thought of using his eloquence to enlist popular support or improve a Parliamentary position, for we were alone. And so I came to see that the mainspring of all his actions was the intense desire to help those who could not help themselves—to defend the under-dog.

"Looking through the long list of the speeches he made, and of the questions he asked, from the beginning of the

Parliament of 1900 until the time of his death, one sees plainly that this was his guiding motive. No detail was so small as to escape his attention if the people he was endeavouring to protect were poor and helpless.

"On the wider questions of the general treatment of natives he displayed the same meticulous care in finding out the true facts of the case. In the controversy that raged round the administration of the Congo, he would not move until he had ascertained the facts, not only from official documents, but from inquiries he himself had set on foot. Indians, Africans, Chinese, as well as his own countrymen and countrywomen, all would find in him a champion and defender, provided only that they were poor, unrepresented, or oppressed."

III.

In some cases the defence of the "under-dog" was a duty imposed by our acknowledged sovereignty or by international obligations.

What might follow from the growing rush for tropical products, capital pursuing large returns "into every jungle in the world," was shown to Europe, in the last months of Sir Charles's life, by the revelations from the Amazon Valley, a scandal to which he was among the first to call attention. This was a region where Great Britain had no special duty. But a series of facts not less horrible, on a scale infinitely vaster, and affecting a population which, originally, could not have numbered less than thirty millions, had, long before the Putumayo revelations, been proved to exist throughout the basin of a great African river. No labour of Sir Charles's later years was more continuous and persistent than his effort to fix on the Imperial Parliament the responsibility for what was done in the Congo Free State, and the duty of putting an end to it.

"He perceived with increasing clearness of vision, as the years went on," says Mr. Morel, "that the future relationship between the white and coloured races in the tropical regions of the globe was bound up with the problem of the Congo, and that the effects of the success or the failure of the movement for Congo reform would govern in great measure the

attitude of Europe towards these questions for very many years."

A State that had been brought into being by England's express sanction, for solemnly defined purposes of civilization in Africa, was proved by its own agent to be employing cannibal troops. That was the circumstance which most impressed a startled House of Commons when, on April 2nd, 1897, Sir Charles raised the first of many discussions upon the question of the Congo.

In 1896 a violent action had brought home to England what had been the fulfilment of the promised free trade for all nations, and of King Leopold's protestations in 1884. Mr. Stokes, a British trader, was arrested and shot by the order of a Belgian officer, Major Lothaire. His offence was trading in ivory. Sir Charles, when he raised the debate in April, 1897, combined then as always the diplomatic with the humanitarian aspect of the case; and brought before the House the existence of the secret decree of September, 1891, declaring a State monopoly of all rubber and ivory, for violation of which Mr. Stokes had been executed.* But it was the publication of Captain Hinde's book,† with its revelation of the fact that European officers had commanded an army fed for long periods by organized cannibalism, which gave authority to Sir Charles's demand for a new conference of the Powers. "We should take action," he said, "to remove from ourselves the disgrace which had fallen upon our declarations."

Mr. Curzon, who as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs then spoke for Lord Salisbury's Government, treated the matter coolly enough, though admitting that the agents of the Congo State had sometimes adopted methods repugnant to Christian feeling; and so for the moment the controversy ended, but Sir Charles with persistent application returned to the question again and again, although his efforts were

* Stokes was also accused of bartering guns to the Arabs for that ivory. This, true or not, does not affect the initial outrage, that, though he was entitled to a proper trial, he was trapped and summarily executed without trial of any kind.

† *The Fall of the Congo Arabs.*

hampered by lack of information. So well was the secret of those dark places kept that even he, with his widespread net of acquaintance in many capitals, found facts hard to gather; and he was naturally attracted by the appearance in 1900 of a series of anonymous articles in the *Speaker*, which dealt with the system set up in the Congo, and its inevitable results. These articles displayed an unusual knowledge of the whole complicated subject, and revealed aspects of it which had previously baffled inquiry. The writer proved to be Mr. E. D. Morel. So began a co-operation whose influence upon the administration of African races was destined to be far-reaching,

The campaign was steadily pressed. Within the House of Commons, Sir Charles spoke session after session, using language of a vehemence that startled in one so moderate. He organized representations to the Senate and Chamber in Belgium, summarizing what was being done in the Congo and urging Belgium's moral responsibility. Out of doors, the Press campaign was vigorous—so vigorous that no Government could disregard it; and at the beginning of 1903, in reply to a question from Sir Charles, Mr. Balfour promised a formal debate "on the position of the signatories to the Berlin General Act of 1885, in regard to the abuses which had grown up under the Congo Free State's rule in violation of that Act." The debate, on May 20th, 1903, was opened by Mr. Herbert Samuel. Sir Charles, following him, was in turn supported by Sir John Gorst, an old ally in such causes. Mr. Balfour, in face of a unanimous House, accepted, not without reluctance, the motion which asked him to consult the co-signatories of the Berlin Act, and thus committed Great Britain to a diplomatic re-opening of the case. Inquiry necessarily followed, and with the publication of our Consul's report in December, 1903, the affair reached a new phase.

When the Foreign Office vote came to be discussed in the Session of 1904, Sir Charles, basing himself on that report, delivered what Sir John Gorst called a "terrible speech." Replying for the Government, Lord Percy used these

words: "There never has been a policy of which it might be said as truly as of this one that it was the policy not so much of His Majesty's Government as of the House of Commons." Not less is it true that Sir Charles had guided the House to the adoption of that policy.

By this time the cause commanded popular interest. The questioning of Ministers was frequent, and it was done by men from all camps. Sir Charles could afford henceforward to select his portion of the work. He limited himself as far as possible to the diplomatic aspect of the case, more technical and less popular in its appeal, but giving the surest right of intervention.

The Foreign Office does not naturally look with favour upon policies forced upon it by the House of Commons, and perhaps for this reason the permanent officials proved opponents very difficult for the House of Commons to control. But Sir Charles's knowledge gave him the necessary advantage. For instance, on November 22nd, 1906, he asked if the United States had not expressed a desire to co-operate with Great Britain in this matter. An official denial was given. On December 16th the question was put again, and the admission made that "the United States have recently expressed" such a desire.

After various obscure negotiations on the part of King Leopold to secure German support for his personal rule, there came at length with the beginning of 1907 the announcement that Belgium would annex the Free State;*

* The delay which took place in the transference of the Congo Free State from the personal rule of King Leopold to the rule of the Belgian Government is dealt with in the following letter from Lord Fitzmaurice from the Foreign Office to Sir Charles:

"*February 16th*, 1906.—The King of the Belgians puts about these stories for the same sort of reason which made the German Emperor put about the story that there was a change of policy in regard to France. At the same time there must be a little 'law' given to the King while his second Commission is reporting on the methods of carrying out the reforms indicated in the first Commission's report. As you know, I am not a believer in the King 'at all, at all,' but one has to observe the forms of diplomacy. It is, perhaps, not unfortunate that this pause coincides with a moment when it is not our interest to be having a row with Belgium also, if perchance we were having a row with Germany." This letter was written while the Algeciras Conference was sitting.

yet the matter was not allowed to sleep in either House of Parliament; it was raised by Sir Charles on the Whitsuntide adjournment, and again in August. In 1908 the subject was mentioned in the King's Speech. But by this time a "Colonial Law" had been proposed in Belgium, which went far to re-establish King Leopold's power under the new system and created new difficulties. Sir Charles's allies now were not in England only. He had made friends with M. Vandervelde, leader of the Socialist party in Belgium, and the one Socialist who had ventured to vote for annexation. They met during Sir Charles's Christmas stay in Paris in 1907, and had "two days' thorough discussion of Congo." The result was written to Lord Fitzmaurice (then Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs) on January 6th, 1908: "I tell you confidentially that, after seeing Vandervelde, I cease to advise moderation, and shall say so to the private Congo Reform meeting called for the 21st." This tone made itself felt in the debate on the Address, and in two subsequent discussions. The points pressed for were, first, that Belgium in taking over the Congo should take over fully and explicitly the Free State's treaty obligations, and, secondly, that full guarantees should be given for native rights.*

But discussion in the Belgian Parliament showed reluctance to accept this view, and on November 4th, 1908, a strong memorandum was despatched by Great Britain. When Parliament reassembled in 1909, a question put by Sir Charles elicited the fact that no answer had been returned to this despatch, and an amendment to the Address was put down by a Unionist, Sir Gilbert Parker. Sir Charles, in supporting it, laid special stress on backing from America, being well aware that relations were strained in Europe.

His speech indicated some fear that the question might be submitted to the Hague Conference.

* On Sir Charles Dilke's action in regard to the Congo, see also *Red Rubber* (T. Fisher Unwin), pp. 4, 11, 177, 195; and *Great Britain and the Congo* (Smith, Elder and Co.), pp. 122, 124, 138, 142, 193, by Mr. E. D. Morel. The official organs of the Congo Reform Association from 1904 until Sir Charles's death contain a complete record of his speeches, both in the House and outside, during this period.

"That," he said, "is not our intention. That is not what Parliament meant. That is not the policy which successive Governments have given their adhesion to. In a state of Europe far more disturbed, even Lord Castlereagh several times took in similar matters far stronger action than is now necessary."

But the Parliament elected in 1906 did not see the end of this affair; and when they next met in February, 1910, King Leopold had died, and there was a new King of the Belgians. On March 10th, Sir George White moved upon the matter, pointing out that there was no improvement in the treatment of the natives and no extension of freedom for trade; and the Foreign Secretary replied in a somewhat ambiguous speech. Annexation, he said, had not yet received the sanction of Great Britain, and could not until improvement in the administration had taken place. But beyond this negative attitude of disapproval, Sir Edward Grey seemed to think that Great Britain could not wisely act alone, and that under the Berlin Act isolated action was in some measure barred. This, in the temper of the moment, was construed as a hint that insistence on reform might drive Belgium into the arms of Germany. Sir Charles said in this debate:

"There is one case, and one only, where I think we see very distinct signs of weakening in our policy, a weakening caused by terror, and undue terror, of the risks which may follow. The papers issued by the Belgian Government with regard to the Congo show a distinct weakening of attitude on our part. . . . In the Belgian despatch they treat us with contempt, with a sort of lofty scorn which is almost inconceivable. I have never known such a thing before; it is an entirely new departure.

"I believe the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has been here to-day, knowing that many members in all quarters of the House have incurred a certain disappointment, which is reflected in the letter in to-day's papers from the Archbishop of Canterbury, with regard to the speech with which he wound up the other night the short debate upon the Congo question. . . . He says that we have not weakened our position, that we have given nothing away, that we have not 'recognized.' But it is not a mere paper recognition

paper non-recognition to which we attach high importance and which we formerly thought we understood from his speeches. . . . We have before us a Bill for the largest naval expenditure that our country has ever incurred in time of peace. We add for the first time to that expenditure colonial expenditure which swells out beyond that of our own Estimates. The House has supported those Estimates, and the Empire is spending on land forces even a larger amount than it is spending on the fleet. None of us believe that war is probable, but we do think, and many of us in this House believe, that the armaments of this country, if they are to have weight in time of peace, ought to have weight behind our diplomacy; and if they are to be justified by many of the arguments put before this House, there is no reason why at this moment we should be afraid of our own shadow. We have been afraid of our own shadow on the Congo question. I think there can be no doubt that we have received from M. Renkin, the Colonial Minister, such treatment as we have never had to put up with from any Power, at all events in recent years." Dilke warned members not to be silenced by unnecessary fears on these matters. "Not even a single question was asked in the far more dangerous case of the ultimatum which we now know was sent to the Turkish Government when they came into office in the beginning of 1906, in regard to the occupation of the village of Tabah. That ultimatum might have raised serious questions in that part of Europe. I think a little more courage would be desirable in a case like that of the Congo. It is not a question of ten pounds or one hundred pounds of somebody's property. We are shocked in the case of the Congo because that which would never happen is put as a conceivable danger at the end of a long train of hypothetical events. It is said that there might be an act of violence. . . . There would not be an act of violence, and I beg the House not to be led away by the fear of trifling complications following upon our insisting, not upon anything new, but upon that which we have been insisting upon for years past in a matter in which our moral obligation is very weighty."

Yet it was not Sir Charles's fortune to see the fulfilment of the long labour in which he had played so great a part. Not till three years later—in June, 1913—did the Congo Reform Association feel that its work was completed, and that it could disband its forces.

Sir Charles's part had been to apply in Parliament the force that was generated outside. From a private position to have guided without seeming to dictate; to have inspired common action among colleagues holding all shades of political thought; to have avoided miscarriage by infinite tact and patience; to have possessed so wide a knowledge of all the complicated issues involved that official reluctance could never avoid action by mysterious pretexts; to have been always so moderate in expression that strong condemnation from him, when it came, was indeed weighty; to have watched time and opportunity, the dispositions of men, the temper of the assembly—all this was necessary to carry through such a Parliamentary task without the power of office, and all this Sir Charles performed. No finer example has been given of what in the Imperial Parliament a member of Parliament can do; and Sir Charles Dilke could well afford to be judged by it, and it alone, as typical of his life-work.

CHAPTER LIV

THE BRITISH ARMY*

In October, 1885, in the course of a speech delivered to his constituents, Dilke expressed his opinion on the subject of the reform of the army, then generally regarded as desirable, but also as so extremely difficult that the old Parliamentary hands shrank from grappling with it. "Everybody was agreed," he said, "upon this point, that we ought to have a strong navy, but there was more difference of opinion as to the army." Speaking personally, and without any authority from others, he felt desirous of throwing out a suggestion whether it would not be possible to have a separate army for India and the colonies, the army being treated as any other trade, and the men being permitted to withdraw when they pleased, with safeguards against the country being involved in loss when men came home prematurely. It would be necessary, of course, to have special training for cavalry, engineers, and artillery, as well as officers and non-commissioned officers; but he believed that for the great mass of the infantry, apart from the Indian and colonial army, we might safely rely upon the volunteers, and encourage volunteering by special advantages.

The suggestion thus modestly thrown out in 1885 proved to be the prelude of the effort of Dilke's later life—to prepare the country and the Empire for the times of storm and stress that were to come. His travels as a young man had given him an unrivalled acquaintance with the chief countries of the world, and especially with

* This and the two following chapters are by Mr. Spenser Wilkinson.

those which constitute the British Empire. In the spring of 1887, in his articles on "The Present Position of European Politics," as already seen, he passed in review the aims of the several Powers of Europe, and the military means which were available for their furtherance. His conclusion, expressed in the first sentence of the first article, was that "the present position of the European world is one in which sheer force holds a larger place than it has held in modern times since the fall of Napoleon." In this condition of Europe, the phenomenon that most impressed him was that "England is of all Powers the most unprepared for war." That being the case, it seemed to him to be the first duty of a British Government to set in order the nation's defences. The next five years he devoted chiefly to an effort to master the subject, to which he gave the name of Imperial Defence.

The spirit and method of Dilke's work on the subject of preparation for war mark him off from all his Parliamentary contemporaries into a class by himself. He took the subject of war seriously. He would not speak of it without knowledge, and, as he had not had the professional education of a naval or military officer, he associated himself as closely as possible in this part of his work with those who appeared to him the most completely to command the subject. His own words were: "Writing on the British Army as a civilian, I am only accepting an invitation which soldiers have often given to their fellow-countrymen. At the same time I have not the presumption to write without military help." *

He diligently studied the military literature of the day, English and foreign, treating of the questions he was considering, and collected a great number of official reports and other documents which he digested. At the same time he entered into correspondence with the best soldiers, in order to learn and appreciate their views. Prominent among these was Sir Frederick Roberts, then Commander-in-Chief in India, with whom during the whole period he was in constant communication. He also sought the collabora-

* *The British Army*, p. 1.

tion of some congenial student of the problems of war, organization, and national defence, in order to insure the thorough discussion of all points, and to guard himself against the temptation to attach too much importance to his own impressions. He wished to acquaint himself with, and to reproduce in his writings, the best that was known and thought in the military world. In 1887, while writing his articles on European Politics, he frequently consulted in this way Colonel Charles Brackenbury, R.A., one of the most accomplished officers of the progressive school, a master of his profession and a clear exponent of its principles.

In this spirit and in these conditions was written the sixth article of the series on European Politics, published in June, 1887, and entitled "The United Kingdom." It was an account of the country's military weakness and a plea for a much-needed improvement of the army. "We spend more upon war services than does any other empire in the world. . . . It is believed abroad, and I fear with reason, that even within the last two years our stock of rifles was so small that there were only enough guns in store to arm the first-class army reserve, so that, in fact, there was from the military point of view no reserve of rifles, and that our ammunition stood at about a similar point of exhaustion. . . . The most capable men of the army tell us very frankly that they are almost in despair at its condition."

Assuming for the moment that all idea were given up of fulfilling the nation's treaty obligations for the defence of Turkey and of Belgium, and that no more were aimed at than the defence of India, of England, and of the colonies, "even upon this reduced estimate of our responsibilities, in the opinion of all competent men, we fall short of power to accomplish our task." In view of this state of things Dilke suggested methods of increasing the strength of the nation, and of obtaining value for the money spent. In the first place, "it is necessary for the statesmen, or if the statesmen will not, then for the public, to lay down for the soldiers a basis of military policy."

"It certainly seems clear, even to those who are not great scientific soldiers, that there is sufficient risk of invasion to make it essential to our position that we should have plenty of cavalry and artillery, plenty of officers, plenty of guns, ammunition, and other stores, always in readiness to supplement the large force of infantry which is provided for us by the militia and volunteers. . . . The things we need to keep in hand are the things which cannot be suddenly improvised —cavalry, artillery, transport, officers, and stores. We can, whatever some soldiers may say, make effective infantry of our volunteers in a short space of time."

"What we have to look to are, mainly, the defence of India, the defence of England, and the supply of a possible expeditionary force. For the defence of India we need, according to an opinion which I expressed at the date of the first introduction of short service, a long-service army." Dilke quoted Major Buxton's words: "For home service and European warfare we need a reserve, and therefore a short-service army. What difficulties do not hamper us in striving to reconcile short service with foreign service! Divide the two services and all becomes simple. The foreign service army . . . requires yearly fewer recruits, becomes acclimatized, and has fewer green young men in its ranks; it is never relieved home, though it moves about abroad. The question of home and foreign reliefs is closed for ever. Recruits go out, and time-expired men come home; that is all." "On the other hand, for the home army," Dilke wrote, "I would rely very largely upon the militia or volunteers, and for the infantry privates of the expeditionary army, upon special volunteers from the militia or volunteers. . . . I am convinced that the time required, provided that your officers and non-commissioned officers are well trained, to make an infantry private is not very great."

"Instead of trying to imitate at one time the Prussians, and at another the French, we ought, in my belief, to strike out a thoroughly national system for ourselves"—the direction to be taken being that of "giving high efficiency to the elements which cannot be rapidly created in the home army,

and the loyal adoption for the infantry of the principle of localization and of union with the militia and volunteers."

In the autumn and winter, with Brackenbury's collaboration, which was not disclosed, as Brackenbury was an officer on the active list, Dilke wrote for the *Fortnightly Review* a second series of articles, entitled, like the volume in which they were afterwards collected, *The British Army*. The first article appeared in November. After its publication, Lord Wolseley wrote: "I have at this moment finished what I may be allowed to call your very interesting military article in the *Fortnightly Review*. I trust it may be read by every voter, and may turn public opinion to the shortcomings of our army and of our military establishments." Dilke thereupon wrote to ask Wolseley for some account, of which public use might be made, of his views upon the condition of the army and of the necessary reforms. Wolseley replied at some length, and said: "I should not like any quotation made from this very hurriedly written letter, but if you care to do so you may say in any of your articles that I entertain these views and opinions." Wolseley's views were given, accordingly, in the third article, in a paraphrase of his letter.

A more complete exposition of England's unreadiness for war has never been written than was contained in *The British Army*. It revealed the neglect of successive Governments to ascertain and determine the purposes for which in war the army would be employed, and the standards, quantitative and qualitative, of the military forces which ought to be kept ready. It showed the evils of excessive centralization. For an expenditure as great as that of a Continental military Power the War Office maintained a regular army, as to which it was doubtful whether it could mobilize, in a condition to take the field, a single army corps. The militia was imperfectly officered. The volunteer force was of unequal quality, and the mass of its officers inadequately trained for war. It was without field artillery, and the guns with which in case of war it ought to be accompanied did not exist. The regular army at home was sacrificed to the necessity of furnishing reliefs to the army in India, which, however, was

not in a condition to defend that country against serious attack.

The system on which Continental armies were raised, organized, and trained, was explained, and proposals were made for reform of the British system. The suggestion was repeated that the British army in India should be rendered independent of the military administration at home, and the home army be relieved of the burden of supplying reliefs to India. This would render possible the introduction of true short service at home, and the enlistment for the Indian army of men willing to serve for comparatively long periods as professional soldiers. It was maintained that for national defence it would be found necessary to rely mainly upon the volunteers, and that therefore they should be given a place in the system corresponding to the call which would have to be made upon them in case of war. In the regular army those elements should be specially maintained which least admit of rapid training—cavalry, field and horse artillery—and a General Staff of an English type ought to be developed.

The cogency of Sir Charles Dilke's appeal to his countrymen to attend to the subject of defence, the weight of authority behind his exposition of the failure of the military administration, and the appropriateness of the reforms which he suggested, will be better conveyed by the quotation of a few passages than by a summary:

"The reign of force of which I have often spoken is so marked at present that no Power can consider itself safe unless it is ready at any time to defend its interests." "Humanly speaking, we can trust for our protection in the last resort only to our strong right arm." "Time is slipping by, and the unreadiness of England is a danger to the peace of the world." "It is time that party politics should be put aside on questions relating to the national defence." He pointed out how dangerous was the influence of those "who may almost be said to oppose all military expenditure, and yet whose ability and honesty gave them a deserved influence with the electors." "It was impossible to adopt

a policy of disarmament without grave danger for the future;" but if it was to be prevented, "the people have to be shown that large expenditure, not only upon naval but also upon military purposes, is a necessity of the time." He deprecated "the unwisdom of those who, thinking our present position unsatisfactory, and more or less agreeing about the main lines of the remedies to be applied, fight among themselves. . . . The points which have a real importance are not those on which we differ, but those upon which we are agreed."

The first question that he wished to have cleared up was what the country would fight for. He pointed out that England was bound by treaty to support the defence of Turkey against Russia, though he doubted whether English opinion would support that policy, and to defend the neutrality of Belgium, as to which he thought the attitude of Governments had been ambiguous. He would himself approve of fulfilling our treaty obligations as regards that country, but he said: "If indeed we are to defend the neutrality of Belgium, we may at any time find ourselves involved in a Continental war against Germany, with France and Belgium for our Allies." He was prepared to accept as a minimum basis for preparation the assumption "that we ought to defend the coaling-stations, to be in a position to defend ourselves in India and at home, and to send, if need were, two army corps abroad as an expeditionary force." One great difficulty of proving a case against the sufficiency and efficiency of the army lay in the fact "that, while soldiers are very willing to communicate information in their possession as to our present weakness, to those who, they think, may help in any degree to set things straight, they not unnaturally shrink from the publication of their names." Yet Dilke was able to express the views of Sir Frederick Roberts, communicated to him very fully, and more briefly those of Lord Wolseley. He was also able to quote Wolseley's statement to a Royal Commission, that "if a hostile force of, say, 100,000 men were to land upon our shores, there is no reason whatever, if that 100,000

were properly led, why they should not take possession of London. . . . We are not in the position we ought to be in, nor do I believe we are in the position we should be in if the English people were told the whole truth."

"The inefficiency of our present organization, and its wastefulness, are admitted by persons who differ as greatly the one from the other as, on the one hand, the chief of the 'Economists,' Lord Randolph Churchill, and, on the other, the soldiers who are the object of his scorn—Lord Wolseley, Sir Frederick Roberts, and General Brackenbury.* Our present position is, therefore, condemned all round, and the day has come when it behoves every Englishman to have an opinion as to the direction in which the remedy is to be sought."

"To form armies which will be of any value against the power of 'armed nations,' it is necessary to provide modern weapons, and here again we are weak just where we should be strong. . . . It is one of the most astonishing features of our 'system' that, with all our enormous expenditure, we manage to drop behind other nations both in the quality of our weapons and the proportional number of them to the hands that would have to use them. The reason probably is that the country has gradually arrived at the absurd belief that Great Britain alone of all nations in the world can by prudence escape the common lot, and never have war again except with savages. From this unfounded and unwise opinion springs grave carelessness as to the condition of the military forces, and Governments desirous of presenting a comparatively small Budget fail to keep up the necessary quantity of arms and stores, because deficiency in these is a weakness easy to conceal. . . . Thus we, who should always be in a state of readiness to supply arms to improvised forces, and to colonial levies, have never enough for the purposes of the home army. We are always compromising between the popularity of a Government and the safety of the Empire."

It will be shown later on how Dilke, when the time came, upheld this opinion by his vote in Parliament, even against his own party and to the sacrifice of his own political interests.

* General Sir Henry Brackenbury, brother of Colonel Charles Brackenbury.

"For an expenditure of nineteen millions the Germans can put into the field nineteen army corps of 37,000 men each, besides an enormous force of garrison troops and a territorial army, of which they could rapidly make a field army of thirty-five army corps in all. For an expenditure of twice nineteen millions we can put into the field in India two army corps, of which one is composed of native troops, but in the United Kingdom, in General Brackenbury's words, owing to our defective organization, we should scarcely be able to put one; but if the army were properly organized we should be able to put two into the field."

Yet it could not be said that the British army fell short in numbers:

"The army proper, the militia, the army reserve and militia reserve, the volunteers, the native troops in India, the 36,000 Canadian militia of the first line, about 16,000 men in Australia and New Zealand, the South African local forces of between six and seven thousand well-trained men, the Irish constabulary, the armed and drilled portion of the Indian constabulary, the Hyderabad contingent, and the marines, easily make up a total of a million of men fit for some kind of land service, of whom very nearly the whole are supposed to serve even in time of peace."

"We are more saving of peace taxes than of war debt. . . . If the arrangement for strict saving in time of peace and for wild waste in time of war was ever a wise one, which in my opinion it was not, even in the days of old-fashioned armies, it is certainly foolish in these times of rapid mobilization. . . . We are in these times exposed to war at a day's notice, and to invasion at very short notice, if our fleet can be divided or drawn away and beaten in detail."

"We are not without men who could reduce our non-system to system. Sir F. Roberts, who has partly done this in India so far as the white army goes, and has attempted, in spite of resistance at home, to reform the native force—Sir F. Roberts could do it. Lord Wolseley, whose organization of each of his expeditions has been careful, energetic, and in every way remarkable, and who in his *Soldier's Pocket-Book* has produced the best of all handbooks to the elements of the art of war—Lord Wolseley could do it. But the existing system does not do it."

In examining the Continental system, Dilke enumerated what he thought the principal points. They were, first of all, personal service by all men, which produced an enormous trained reserve; then complete localization both of troops and stores; fully worked out plans of mobilization and arrangements for obtaining horses instantly on the outbreak of war; and last, but not least, "the organization of a General Staff which shall act as the brain and nervous system of the army, and shall draw to it and pass through its training as large a number of officers as possible, so that experienced staff officers shall be numerous in the event of war."

In spite of his appreciation of the Continental system, Dilke did not advocate universal compulsory service:

"Many of my correspondents cannot understand why I do not advocate for the British army that same general service which now prevails almost universally on the Continent, and brings with it so many good fruits both for the nation and the army. I have, as I have shown, no personal objection to it, but I have pointed out the existence of a fatal obstacle in certain forms of English and Scotch religious and certain forms of English commercial thought. It would be unpractical to consider at length a measure which stands no present chance of adoption. The time may come when we shall be drawn into a struggle for life or death, and it seems to me that it will very probably come within the next ten years, and maybe bring with it the necessity for that general service which would now be impossible of attainment. For our present ideas of the imperial position general service is not necessary, and, moreover, until some capacity is shown for organizing the troops which we already possess, I do not see the slightest use in obtaining a large number of fresh men. But, in view of the reign of force which now exists in Europe, and of slowly but surely advancing danger in the East, it is impossible to contemplate an ideal defence of the Empire without supposing that the inhabitants of Great Britain and all her colonies may arrive at a condition in which every strong man shall recognize that he owes to the State some kind of defensive military service. I have tried to make it plain that such service need not be in the regular army; still less need any man with us be taken against his will to fight

outside the limits of his own country. But there can be no ideal defence in which the bulk of the population is not trained, however slightly, in the handling of military weapons, and the individual man trained in spirit to believe that the hearths and homes where his sisters or his wife live free from danger owe their immunity from attack, not merely to a half-despised 'mercenary army,' but to the strength and the skill of his own right arm."

"My first condition for an ideal British organization would be freedom of the fleet from the calls of local defence. The maritime fortresses and coaling-stations should all be capable of defending themselves." This meant, of course, guns and garrisons. "My second ideal principle would be to look to local help for all garrisons where that system is possible, we retaining always a large staff of specially well-trained officers for the purpose of organizing and commanding local levies in war."

Dilke thought it needful for England to train as many officers as possible, especially as she had an ample supply of men capable, if trained, of being good officers.

"Is it possible to conceive a more absurd situation than that of the wealthiest country in the world, with a vast reserve of high-blooded youth lying idle, and enormous masses of warlike people, Sikhs, Goorkhas, Mahrattas, Zulus, Arabs, Malays, and what not, under our hands 'spoiling for a fight,' while this nation is unprepared to defend its own possessions and its very existence in circumstances which all know to be more than likely to occur? This nation, our nation, might absolutely keep the peace of the world, yet shivers at every breeze of Continental politics."

Dilke's scheme was for a professional army for India and for a citizen army at home, in which the bulk of the infantry would be volunteers, while the special arms and the infantry of two army corps, destined to be an expeditionary force, would be short-service soldiers. It was in its broad outlines a forecast of the actual development that has taken place. In particular he proposed, what was carried out by Lord Haldane's Act, that "the militia should become liable to general service in war, and should be organized and equipped accordingly. The volunteers should

be liable to be called out for home defence whenever the two army corps were sent out of the kingdom."

"My first object," he said in conclusion, "has been to point out how seriously our national military strength falls behind our requirements, and how unready we always are, in spite of our huge expenditure. My second object was to show that what we want most is, not a great and expensive increase of the regular army, but an endeavour to make the best possible use of what we have already, by proper organization and by utilizing to the utmost the voluntary principle, which best suits our national temper and that of the colonies. . . . We stand in presence of new forces the power of which is almost incalculable, and, while I admit that there are in the army a great number of able men, perhaps more than there ever were, capable both of creating new systems and of leading us to victory, I am inclined to think that their characters have been formed in spite of an obsolete and decaying system, and that they are restrained by the incapacity of others and the carelessness of the country from exercising the influence which their talents and energy ought to command. If the question were one of commerce, liberty, or progress in civil affairs, the nation would be interested, and would bring the resources of its accumulated knowledge to bear on the subject. But being, as it is, a question without the right settlement of which neither commerce nor liberty is safe, the public is so little in earnest about it that politicians are allowed to play with it, and the serious needs of self-defence are sacrificed to the poor aim of keeping constituencies in good-humour. Nothing can or will be done by Governments of any party till the nation can be roused to some expression of public opinion; and that opinion has to be formed before it can be expressed. In the reign of force which now prevails throughout Europe, carelessness as to our power of defence is culpable beyond possibility of exaggeration, for we may have to defend not only our individual interests as a nation, but all that enormous influence for the good of mankind which is at present exercised in the remotest parts of the earth by an enormous Empire bent on preventing war and on spreading the blessings of peace."

Coming when it did, *The British Army* made an impression on the educated public. It followed soon after the report of Sir James Stephen's Commission, which had exposed

the chaotic condition of the administration of the army. Dilke revealed a grasp of every branch of the subject. His criticisms reflected the judgment of officers familiar with the branch of service discussed. His proposals were modest and intelligible, and in every case represented some body of competent military opinion. He told the public much that none of his readers fully appreciated at the time. The German army had been largely increased in the spring of 1887, and in the beginning of 1888 a Bill passed the Reichstag which increased by a further 700,000 men the numbers available in case of war. Dilke explained in one of his chapters that, "according to the calculations of the French Staff, the total number of armed men upon which Germany would be able to draw for all purposes would exceed 7,000,000."* This and other forecasts may startle those readers whose curiosity tempts them to read the volume again in 1917. But the work produced no practical result except to put Dilke into the front rank of army reformers. The Government took no action to remedy the military weakness which everyone recognized. The report of the Stephen Commission remained a dead letter. In June, 1888, a new Royal Commission was issued, in which the Marquis of Hartington, associated with a number of colleagues of Cabinet rank and with a General and an Admiral, was instructed to inquire into the administration of the naval and military departments. The attempt at reform was postponed until these Commissioners should have made their report.

* *The British Army*, p. 161.

CHAPTER LV

IMPERIAL DEFENCE

I.

Sir Charles Dilke's visit to India in 1888-1889 convinced him that he had been right in believing the Indian army to be better prepared for war than the portion of the army which was kept at home. A great difficulty he now saw was that there were two rival plans of campaign, the one cherished in India, the other by officers at home. "The greater number of Indian officers expect to march with a large force into Afghanistan to meet the Russians, and believe that reinforcements will be sent from England to swell their armies and to make up for losses in the field. On the other hand, the dominant school in England expect to send an expedition from England, in combination with Turkey or some other allied Power, to attack Russia in other quarters." Dilke was led accordingly to the general conclusion that the one thing needful was "that we should try to remove the consideration of these subjects from the home or the Indian or the Canadian point of view, and should take a general view of the possibilities of Imperial defence."

The attempt to take this imperial view was made in *Problems of Greater Britain*, which Dilke wrote during the remainder of the year 1889. In this work he discussed the defence of the North-West Frontier of India as a prelude to the examination of the defence of the British Empire. His reason for this separate treatment was that "only on this one of all the frontiers of the Empire the British dominion is virtually conterminous with the continental possessions

of a great military Power." He showed that the serious import of this condition was understood by all who knew India well and by both the political parties in England. He dissented from the view that security could be obtained by an agreement with Russia, because it was not easy to see "how Russia could put it out of her own power at any moment to threaten us on the North-West Frontier." The suggestion that Russia should be allowed to occupy the northern portion of Afghanistan he rejected, first because it would have been a flagrant breach of faith with the Amir, and secondly because it would give to Russia territory which she could quickly transform into a base of operations against India.

He thought that Russia could not invade India with a good chance of success if she started from her present frontier, but that if she were allowed to occupy the northern portion of Afghanistan the Indian Government would be put to ruinous expense for the defensive preparations which would then be required.* He noted that the policy of advance upon our left, which he had recommended in 1868, had been adopted with success, chiefly by the efficacy of the Sandeman system of recognizing and supporting the tribal chiefs and requiring them to maintain order, and also by the occupation and fortification of the position of Quetta and by the opening of roads from Quetta through the Gomul and other passes to the Indus at Dera Ismail Khan and Dera Ghazi Khan. This would enable an Indian army to attack the right flank of any Russian force attempting to advance along the Khyber line, which would be resisted in the Khyber hills and at Attock, and be stopped at the fortress of Rawal Pindi. Generally speaking, he held that Indian "defence must be by the offensive with the field army, and the less we have to do with fortifications, the better." He urged the extension northwards of the

* 'Lord Dufferin wrote to me from the Embassy at Rome to express his satisfaction with the Indian portion of my book, and especially those passages in which I demonstrated the exceeding folly of which we should be guilty if ever we consented to a partition of Afghanistan with Russia.'

Sandeman system to all the independent tribes between the Indian and the Afghan borders. If the separate armies for the Presidencies were to be united under a single Commander-in-Chief, as the Indian Government had long desired, and if the principle of enlisting in the native army only men of fighting races were fully adopted, and the native Princes induced to place effective contingents at the disposal of the Government, he thought that India with reinforcements from home would be well able to resist a Russian attack starting from the frontier that Russia then possessed.

But if Russia should once be established at Herat, with railway communications to that point, there would be hardly any limit to the force with which it would become necessary to resist her. He therefore urged that the Russian Government should be given to understand that any advance of her forces into Afghanistan would be regarded by England as a hostile act. At the same time he admitted that it was difficult to see how Russia was in that event to be fought. He still thought that she would be vulnerable at Vladivostock—at any rate until her railway to the Pacific should be completed*—but he was aware that this view was shared neither by the Indian nor the British officers likely to be heard.

In his chapter on Indian Defence Dilke had exhausted the subject from the Indian point of view. He was fully acquainted with the ideas of all those who had been seriously concerned with the problem, of which he had discussed every aspect with them, and his exposition was complete. When in his last chapter he came to "examine the conditions of the defence of the Empire as a whole, and to try to find some general principle for our guidance," he was to a great extent breaking new ground. The subject had been treated in 1888 by Colonel Maurice, after-

* He considered that, with a view to any future struggle with Russia, the abandonment of Port Hamilton in 1886 by Lord Salisbury had been unfortunate. See, as to Port Hamilton, *Life of Granville*, ii. 440; *Europe and the Far East*, by Sir Robert Douglas, pp. 190, 248.

wards General Sir Frederick Maurice, in his essay on the Balance of Military Power in Europe, but Maurice based his scheme on the assumption of a Continental alliance which Dilke thought impracticable. It had also been treated with great insight as early as 1880 by Sir John Colomb in his *Defence of Great and Greater Britain.* His brother Admiral Philip Colomb had more recently expounded the view that the right plan was to make the enemy's coasts our frontier, and to blockade the whole of his ports, so that it would be impossible for his fleets to issue forth. This seemed to Dilke to imply a superiority of naval force which England did not possess, and was not then intending to create. But Sir John Colomb in 1880 had admitted the absolute necessity of being prepared to render invasion impossible by purely military forces. "It was necessary," he had said, "that invasion be efficiently guarded against, so that, should our home fleet be temporarily disabled, we may, under cover of our army, prepare and strengthen it to regain lost ground and renew the struggle for that which is essential to our life as a nation and our existence as an Empire."

Sir Charles Dilke thought this sound sense, and that it was rash, in view of the inadequate strength of the actual navy and of the uncertainty as to the effect of new inventions on naval warfare, to count upon beginning a future war with a repetition of Trafalgar. He admitted that the navy, if concentrated in home waters, would be fully able to defend the United Kingdom, but that the fleets if so concentrated must abandon the remainder of the Empire, and that this would involve the destruction of our commerce and would be as severe a blow to the Empire as the invasion of England. He inferred that the navy must be the chief agent in defence, but backed by fortification and by land forces. There ought to be squadrons in distant seas strong enough to hold their own, without reinforcements, against probable enemies on the same stations. The coaling ports must be suitably fortified and have all the troops necessary for their garrisons on the spot in time of

peace.* He carefully considered the question of food-supply at home and the possibility of a commercial blockade of the United Kingdom. He did not think that such a blockade could be established or maintained. "Our manufactures would be seriously assailed, our food-supply would become precarious, but we should not be brought to the point of surrender by absolute starvation, and the possibility of invasion is not excluded, as some of the naval school pretend, by the fact that it would be unnecessary."

"On the other hand, a defeat or a temporary absence of the fleet might lead to bombardments, attacks upon arsenals, and even to invasion, if our mobile land forces, our fortifications and their garrisons, were not such as to render attacks of any kind too dangerous to be worth attempting. In the absence of the fleet a landing could not be prevented. But the troops landed ought to be attacked. For this purpose we do not need an immense number of ill-trained, badly-equipped, and unorganized troops, but an army completely ready to take the field and fight in the open, supplied with a well-trained field artillery."

But the mere protection of Great and Greater Britain was not enough. "It is idle to suppose that war could be brought to a termination unless we are prepared in some way to obtain advantages over the enemy such as to cause him to weary of the struggle. The *riposte* is as necessary in warfare as in fencing, and defence must include the possibility of counter-attack." "In view of almost any conceivable hostilities, we ought to be prepared to supply arms and officers to native levies which would support our Empire in various portions of the globe." But we had too few officers for our own troops at home, in India, and in the auxiliary forces. The stocks of arms ought to be larger than they were, and there ought to be centres of production for them in various parts of the Empire. "The

* Autumn of 1889: 'Among those with whom I corresponded about my book was Lord Charles Beresford, who gave me a great deal of information about coaling-stations for my chapter on Imperial Defence, in which I also had Charles Brackenbury's help to a considerable extent.'

moneys that the British Empire spends upon defence are immensely great, and what is wanted is that those moneys should be spent as is decided by the best advisers who can be obtained." "The main thing needed for a joint organization of the whole of the defensive forces of the Empire is the creation of a body of men whose duty it would be to consider the questions raised, and to work out the answers." For this purpose he thought the one thing needful was a General Staff, an institution of which he gave a brief account, based on Mr. Spenser Wilkinson's essay *The Brain of an Army*, of which the author had sent him the proofs. "A General Staff," Dilke wrote, "would neither inspect troops nor regulate the promotion of the army, but it would decide the principles which would arrange the distribution of the Imperial forces. . . . The very existence of a General Staff would constitute a form of Imperial military federation."

II.

In December, 1890, Dilke read before the Statistical Society a paper on the Defence Expenditure of the Chief Military and Naval Powers. He had taken great pains to ascertain what each Power spent on its army and navy, and what return it obtained for its money. The net result was that, while France and Germany for an expenditure of about 28 millions sterling could each of them put into the field a mobile force of two million men, the British Empire, at a cost of 35½ millions, had "a nominal force of 850,000 of various degrees of training wholly unorganized, and supplied only with the professional artillery needed for a force of about 150,000 men." The British navy was more formidable than the French, and "the German navy does not as yet exist. I say 'as yet,' for the Germans mean business with their navy, and have begun, in a business-like manner, at the top, putting at the head of it their best administrators." The French were spending altogether on defence a total of 36 to 36½ millions, the Germans 38, and the British Empire 57 millions. The moral was that,

"whatever the peace expenditure, war cannot be commenced with a fair chance of winning by a nation which waits until war to make her organization perfect. Germany before 1870 prepared in time of peace her corps, her armies, and provided them all with officers for the various commands, who knew what their duties would be in war. All countries spending much on their armies now do the same, except the United Kingdom, which stands alone in having still practically little but a regimental system in existence. But although we are old-fashioned, to the point of being utterly unprepared (except in India) for the stress of war, we nevertheless spend sums so vast as to stagger and amaze even the French and German critics, who ought to be pretty well used, one would think, to large sums for military expenditure."*

Early in 1891 Dilke proposed to Spenser Wilkinson that they should join in writing a new popular book on Imperial Defence. During that year the two men kept up a constant correspondence, and Wilkinson was frequently Dilke's guest in London, at Dockett and Pyrford, and in the Forest of Dean. At Whitsuntide Dilke stayed at Aldershot (where Wilkinson was in camp with his old volunteer battalion, the 2nd Manchester), and went every day to see the regiment at work.

In September, on the eve of Dilke's starting for the French manœuvres, Wilkinson sent him the draft of an introduction to the proposed book. It challenged the widely-held opinion that war is wicked in itself, and might by political arrangement be rendered unnecessary, and deprecated the abstention from inquiry into its methods which this opinion encouraged. It challenged the maxim 'No foreign policy,' which meant either having no relations with other countries, or, having such rela-

* Sir Charles notes in 1893: 'Sir William Harcourt on the British Army: "One knows a man who has ten thousand a year, sixteen horses, and ten carriages, and yet if one guest comes he has difficulty to find a dogcart to meet him, and if two come a fly has to be hired. The British nation also spends its money freely, and has equal difficulty in meeting the slightest emergency."'

tions, conducting them without system. War should be conceived of as imposed upon States by an irreconcilable opposition of purposes, and was always a means to an end. Peace could not be secured by a policy which adopts it as a supreme end. The confusion between defence as a political attitude and defence as an operation of war had led to the neglect, by English public opinion, of all naval and military preparations that might be available for attack. But the essential elements of defensive strength, fleets and armies, were mobile and equally available for offensive operations, and no efficient preparation for defence was possible that would not also serve for attack. Without a clear and true conception of the character of war as a conflict of national purposes, proper conduct of military operations and of defensive preparations was impossible, and to its absence was due the unorganized condition of the defence of the Empire. Dilke, in acknowledging the manuscript, wrote: "I've read it all and like it, but shall shorten it a little," and in returning the manuscript, with his modifications, wrote: "The introduction is most excellent—stately and interesting: I can say this, as it is almost all yours." Wilkinson then sent a chapter entitled "The Primacy of the Navy."

"An attack on land conducted across the sea is a most hazardous speculation so long as there exists anywhere a hostile fleet that is able to fight. In order to make such an attack safe, it is indispensable that the attacker should secure himself from all interruption by destroying or driving from the sea any hostile fleet. The Power which should succeed in doing this would have 'the command of the sea' as against its particular enemy. . . . The territories of the Power having command of the sea are virtually safe against attack by sea. . . . The British navy, then, so long as it maintains the superiority at sea is a sufficient protection against invasion for every part of the Empire except India and Canada. If, however, the navy were to suffer decisive defeat, if it were driven to seek the shelter of its fortified harbours and kept there, or if it were destroyed—then, not only would every part of the Empire be open to invasion, but the communication between the

several parts would be cut, and no mutual succour would be possible.

"The defeat of the British fleet or fleets would, of course, be effected by purely naval operations; but the acquiescence in its destruction could, perhaps, only be secured by a blow affecting the British power at its source, and therefore the establishment by an enemy of his naval superiority would almost certainly be followed by an invasion of Great Britain. So long, then, as the British navy can be maintained invincible, the Empire could be adequately defended against attack of any European Power other than Russia, and for such a defence, therefore, no more is needed than complete naval preparation, and such military preparation as is required for the full efficiency of the navy. Any additional military preparation is, as against attack of this nature, merely an insurance to cover the possibility of the failure of the navy. After such failure, it might save the British Islands, but it could not save the Empire."

Dilke wrote that this doctrine was the opposite of what he had previously held and preached, and expressed a doubt whether, that being the case, the book could go on as a joint work. Wilkinson replied that the first question was whether the doctrine of the chapter was sound, and that the question of the names on the title-page could wait till the work was done.

In *Problems of Greater Britain* Dilke had discussed the view of Sir John Colomb and of his brother, Admiral Colomb. The Admiral appeared to rely upon "blockade," which required a navy much stronger than Great Britain possessed, and might, with modern weapons and the torpedo, be impracticable of execution, while Sir John Colomb appeared to admit the necessity of purely military forces to prevent invasion. Dilke, looking at the extent of the Empire to be defended, had thought that the concentration of the navy in home waters must involve the abandonment of the rest of the Empire. This is the view usually held by those who are thinking of what they have to protect. Wilkinson thought first of the enemy's forces and how to destroy them. If they can be destroyed, the enemy is helpless and the territories of the victor are safe, because

the enemy has no force with which to molest them. On the appearance of *Problems*, Dilke, as the extracts from his Diary at that time show, had begun to doubt whether this view was not the right one; Wilkinson's exposition and the discussion which accompanied it completed his conversion. This was the turning-point of his studies of Imperial Defence.

The next chapter was headed "The Command of the Sea." Here the debated doctrine was applied.

"The purpose of Great Britain to render her territories secure would be perfectly accomplished by the destruction of the enemy's navy, as this would render any attempt at the transport of troops impracticable. The destruction of the enemy's navy would, of course, also be the best possible protection for England's sea-borne trade (though, no doubt, for this purpose additional measures would be required), and for her communications with every part of her Empire. Thus, in every possible war in which Great Britain could engage, the prime function of the British navy is to attack, and if possible to destroy, the organized naval forces of the enemy."

Suppose the enemy sought battle, the question would soon be decided, but if he wished to avoid it the difficulty would be to find him and to compel him to accept it. For this purpose the best plan was that adopted in 1803 by Lord St. Vincent, which consisted in placing at the outset, in front of every one of the enemy's military ports, a British squadron superior to that which the enemy had within it. This was incorrectly termed "blockade," as the object was not to prevent the issue of the French fleets from their ports, but to prevent their exit unwatched and to fight them when they should come out. This plan must be supplemented by a reserve fleet, and by numerous cruisers to hunt such of the enemy's cruisers as might be at large. The alternative plan of Lord Howe, of concentrating the fleet at one of the home ports, was also discussed, but considered less advantageous, as it left the enemy's fleet free to proceed to sea. But it was shown that the

navy of 1891 was twenty battleships short of the number believed by naval officers to be required for the successful adoption of St. Vincent's plan against the French navy alone.

The defence of India was treated in two chapters entitled "The Peace of India" and "The North-West Frontier," which were in substance a restatement of the view expressed in *Problems of Greater Britain*.

The chapter on "The Armies" was a translation into specific shape, with full details and calculations, of Dilke's idea of a separation between the British and Indian systems. It was argued that the militia and volunteers should be organized into army corps with permanent fully paid commanders and the necessary auxiliary troops, and it was pointed out that the volunteer department of the War Office ought to be entrusted to volunteer officers. A chapter on "The Management of the Home Army" asserted that "Any system proposed for the better management of the army must satisfy three distinct conditions: It must be framed with a view to the preparation of the army for war; it must secure unimpaired the authority of the Cabinet; and it must provide for an efficient control over expenditure by the House of Commons." The first requirement of a sound system was a general who could be entrusted with the duty of advising the Cabinet upon the conduct of war and with the actual management of campaigns. He ought to have a proper general staff, and the field troops at home should be organized into localized autonomous army corps. "The British army at home has no generals, and can have none until its battalions are settled and grouped into brigades, divisions, and army corps." There must be a second general charged with all branches of supply.

Any satisfactory Admiralty system, it was pointed out, would provide a competent naval adviser for the Cabinet. But it was doubted "whether it will be possible to secure unity of design in defence so long as the War Office and the Admiralty are separately represented in the Cabinet.

The difficulty would be overcome if it became the practice for one Minister to hold both offices." Dilke had long had the common-sense idea that a single Minister ought to have general charge of all the preparations for war and its conduct by sea and land.

He had made excisions and additions in the chapters as they had reached him, and had closely scrutinized the expression throughout. The whole book was read through by the two men together, and each point discussed to complete agreement. Dilke then proposed that it should appear in Wilkinson's name, as it was substantially Wilkinson's work, and that he himself might write a preface. Wilkinson said that it was a joint work, that the idea of the book was Dilke's, that its substance was the outcome of the intimate exchange of views between them, and that it ought to bear both their names. In his diary Dilke wrote: "Wilkinson's part in it was far greater than mine, though we argued out the whole." When the book appeared, Admiral Colomb wrote to Dilke: "On reading the introduction and the first and second chapters, I am inclined to sing 'Nunc dimittis,' for, as far as I can understand the matter, you put forward all the views for which I have contended; and coming thus from your hands, I think they will henceforth be current views." Dilke sent the letter to Wilkinson, noting on it: "Colomb thinks *he* has converted me. I reply, *he couldn't.* You did—after he had failed." He regarded his collaboration with Wilkinson as an intellectual partnership in regard to defence, and hardly ever spoke or wrote on the subject without referring to it.

The development of Sir Charles Dilke's thoughts on defence has now been fully traced and his method of work revealed. His mind was unreservedly open to take in the thoughts of others, and he was incessantly trying to know the best that was thought and said concerning the subjects that interested him. He assimilated the substance of a vast correspondence, and on every topic the ideas which he received became a part of him. His intellectual life was

thus an incessant dialectic with the best minds of his time. But he never accepted ideas from others without the most generous acknowledgment, and did not, as so many men do, proceed, after assimilating another man's thought, to imagine that it was his own invention. This intellectual candour, involving a rare modesty and absence of affectation, was one of his finest characteristics.

CHAPTER LVI

ARMY AND NAVY IN PARLIAMENT

I.

In 1892, when Sir Charles Dilke returned to the House of Commons as member for the Forest of Dean, his mind was made up in regard to the subject of national defence, and from that time on he worked in and out of Parliament to bring about an organization for war of the resources of the nation and of the Empire.

At that time the management of both services was hampered by the accumulated changes made by three generations of statesmen intent upon home affairs, under which were buried and hidden the traditions of an earlier period of wars. In 1857 the Duke of Cambridge had been appointed Commander-in-Chief in deference to the belief of the Prince Consort, inspired by Baron Stockmar, that in order to avert revolution the royal authority over the army must be exercised through a Prince, and not through the channel of a Minister responsible to Parliament. The Duke thought it his mission to resist changes, and his obstruction had been the bane of successive Ministers. Accordingly, the statesmen of Cabinet rank and experience were anxious at all cost to establish the supremacy of the Cabinet over the army, and for this purpose had welcomed the proposal of the Hartington Commission to abolish the office of Commander-in-Chief whenever the Duke of Cambridge should cease to hold that post. The Commission had not considered that a change of persons might solve the difficulty, and was led astray by the proposal to appoint "a Chief of the Staff," who was to be, not the strategical adviser

of the head of the army, but rather its administrator in chief. In every modern army there is a Chief of the General Staff to assist the Commander-in-Chief, the principal executive officer, as well as an Administrator-General to manage the business of supply. The Hartington Commission proposed to give the name "Chief of the Staff" to an Administrator-General. It further proposed the creation of a Committee of the Cabinet to hold the balance between the requirements of the War Office and those of the Admiralty.

Dilke recognized as fully as the occupants of either front bench the necessity for the paramount authority of the Cabinet. He also felt the need for co-ordination between the War Office and the Admiralty, and considered that both these needs would best be met by a single Minister, the Prime Minister, supervising or taking charge of both offices. The essence of co-ordination would consist in framing the arrangements for both services with a single eye to victory in war.

Dilke's first step was to get into touch with those members of Parliament who were most keenly interested in the army and navy.

'On February 21st (1893) I had a meeting, which I had suggested, with Lord Wolmer, General Sir George Chesney, and H. O. Arnold-Forster, and agreed on joint action in all service matters, and to attend the meeting of the service members fixed for the next day, to which, although civilians, Arnold-Forster and I were asked. We wrote Wolmer's motion for him.'

At this time Campbell-Bannerman was Secretary of State for War. On March 9th the House was to go into Committee of Supply, and on the motion "that Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair" Lord Wolmer moved "that in the opinion of this House the present system of military administration fails to secure either due economy in time of peace or efficiency for national defence." Lord Wolmer in his speech referred to the breakdown in the system of recruiting which had been disclosed in the report of Lord

Wantage's Committee. He was supported by Sir George Chesney, who referred to the report of Sir James Stephen's Commission as "a scathing exposure of mismanagement," and to that of the Hartington Commission as "an unqualified and alarming denunciation of our military system." Arnold-Forster also supported the resolution, in favour of which Dilke made a short and incisive speech. Campbell-Bannerman declined to take the discussion seriously. "The first observation," he said, "that must occur to anyone reading the motion is, What in the world has the report of Lord Wantage's Committee to do with the present system of military administration? It is as if the noble lord were to call attention to the Tenterden Steeple, and to move that the Goodwin Sands are a danger to navigation." But the breakdown of recruiting was the crucial evidence of the weakness of the military administration.

In September, 1893, the question of the then recent appointment of the Duke of Connaught to the command at Aldershot was raised in the House of Commons by Mr. Dalziel. It was defended by Campbell-Bannerman on the ground that the Duke possessed sufficient qualifications for the post. If that had been the sole question, said Dilke, he should have supported the Government.

"But there was another point. Aldershot was a training-school not only for the men and regimental officers there employed, but also for the Generals commanding. It might be said to be the only school in the United Kingdom where a general officer could obtain experience in commanding men in battle, and therefore only officers who were likely to command armies in case of serious war ought to be put in command of such a place. Was it likely that the Duke of Connaught, under the circumstances, would be called upon to take the chief command against a European enemy in case of war?"

In the division Dilke voted against the appointment.

On December 19th Lord George Hamilton moved a resolution "that a considerable addition should at once be made to the navy." Mr. Gladstone regarded this proposal

as a vote of censure on the Government, and delivered an indignant reply. Dilke deprecated making the navy a subject of party controversy, and made an appeal to his Liberal friends:

"All naval experts who have been consulted on the question have always laid it down that, for safety, you must have a supremacy of five to three in battleships, that you require that supremacy for the policy of blockade. . . . If ever we engage in war . . . it is a necessity of the position of this country that our frontiers should be at the enemy's ports. . . . I know this is not a popular policy, but the existence of the Empire depends upon it. . . . Liberals should give up thinking of this question of national defence as a hateful one, and as one against which they ought to close their eyes and ears. I know that, in these days of great armaments on the Continent, the old tradition of the Liberal party, that they should look to the possibility of using the forces of this country on behalf of Continental freedom, has become a dream of the past. They must remember that our liberties at home depend upon the efficiency of our fleet, and that, beyond this, the very existence of our Empire is concerned in the question which the House is at this moment debating."

The sequel to this debate was Mr. Gladstone's retirement in February, 1894.

Early in the autumn of 1893 Dilke had talked over with Spenser Wilkinson the line to be taken in Parliament by the service members. Wilkinson had urged as a preliminary some effort to obtain agreement among the "experts," suggesting that Chesney as the ablest of them all should first be approached. On November 8th Chesney and Wilkinson dined at Sloane Street, and, Chesney having expressed his general concurrence in the views as to administration explained in *Imperial Defence*, Dilke proposed that Wilkinson should draft a letter to the Prime Minister, embodying the main points, to be signed by all three and by Arnold-Forster, if he should be in accord with them, and to be sent not only to Mr. Gladstone, but to the leaders of the Opposition. The result was the following letter, which was eventually signed and sent on February 12th, 1894, to Mr. Gladstone

(then Prime Minister), to Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Devonshire, Mr. Balfour, and Mr. Chamberlain:

Sir,

The late debate in the House of Commons on the subject of the navy was one of many symptoms of a widespread uneasiness with regard to the defences of the Empire. There is a doubt of the sufficiency of the naval establishments and of the efficiency in some respects of the systems under which the navy and the army are administered. This failure of confidence has been of gradual growth. Those who think it justified do not attribute the responsibility for it to any one administration or to either party in the State. Yet it seems difficult to discuss these doubts in Parliament without, at least, the appearance of censure upon the Government of the day, a result which is unfortunate, for the subject should unite rather than divide parties, and upon its paramount importance there is no difference of opinion.

For this reason a service may perhaps be rendered by the communication to the Prime Minister and to the leaders of the Opposition of suggestions which commend themselves to men of different parties who have from different points of view for many years given attention to questions relating to national defence.

No arrangements which aimed at or resulted in a subversion of the principles which experience has shown to be essential to the working of constitutional government could be seriously considered. But no system of defence, however constitutional, can avail unless it be shaped with a view to war. It is to the conciliation of these two necessities, that of compatibility with the constitution and that of adaptation to the purpose of war, that our attention has been directed.

If the preservation of peace depended upon the goodwill of the British Government, there would perhaps be little need for a navy or an army. The existence of these services implies that this is not the case, and that safety in time of war depends upon forethought and preparation in advance. Such preparation involves a view of the nature of a possible war and an estimate of the intensity of the effort it would impose, this view and this estimate furnishing the standard for the quantity and quality of the means to be kept available.

The design, without which even a defensive war cannot be carried on, and in the absence of which preparations made during peace must fail to serve their purpose, is properly the secret of the Government. Yet, where the Government is responsible to a Parliament, it is indispensable either that so much of the design should be communicated to Parliament as will enable it to judge of the necessity and of the sufficiency of the preparations for which supplies must be voted, or that Parliament should know who are the professional advisers upon whose judgment the Government relies. Neither of these conditions seems to us at present to be fulfilled, and as a consequence of the omission there has arisen in the public mind that distrust to which we have alluded.

The leading decision in the administration of the national defence, governing the whole course and character of any future war, is that which settles the total amount of expenditure upon preparation and apportions it between the naval and military services. For this decision the Cabinet is, and must ever be, responsible. Yet in the distribution of the business of the Cabinet into departments there appears to be no office specially entrusted with the consideration of war as a whole, embracing the functions both of the navy and of the army. Of the sums usually devoted each year to warlike preparations, the larger part is spent upon the army, and only a lesser part upon the navy, upon which the maintenance of the Empire and the security of Great Britain must ever chiefly depend. It is difficult to believe that this apportionment is the result of deliberate examination of the requirements of war. It would seem more probable that the separate existence of a department of the navy and a department of the army leads in practice to the management of each for its own sake rather than as an instrument serving a more general purpose.

In order to secure the special consideration by the Cabinet of national defence as distinct from and superior to the administration either of the navy or of the army, we would suggest the appointment of one and the same Minister to the two offices of Secretary of State for War and First Lord of the Admiralty, or the amalgamation, with the consent of Parliament, of these two offices.

We would further suggest that the Cabinet should select for each service an officer whose professional judgment commands its confidence, to be at once the responsible adviser of the Cabinet upon all questions regarding the

conduct of war so far as his own service is concerned, and the principal executive officer of that service.

We understand by a responsible adviser one who stands or falls by the advice which he gives. He would, of course, have at his disposal, in the formation of his views, the best assistance which the professional staff of the navy or of the army could supply. But the opinion which, after mature consideration, he would submit to the Cabinet, and formally record, would be his own and would be given in his own name. It follows that a difference of opinion between the Cabinet and its naval or its military adviser upon any important matter of naval or military policy would lead to the resignation of the latter. In our view, the essence of responsibility for advice is that the officer giving it is identified with it, and remains in the post only so long as his judgment upon the professional matters with reference to which he is consulted is acceptable to the Cabinet which he serves. In order to facilitate his independence in this respect, provision should be made, in case of his resignation, for his employment in another post or for his honourable retirement.

If these suggestions were adopted, the passage in case of need from peace to war would take place without personal or administrative change. The adaptation of the whole service, whether naval or military, to the necessities of war, as understood by a competent officer studying them with full responsibility, would be assured. The House of Commons and the public would have in the person of the naval and of the military adviser a guarantee of the sufficiency and of the efficiency of the navy and of the army. The authority of the Cabinet and the control of the House of Commons would be unimpaired.

We are, sir,

Your obedient servants,

Charles W. Dilke.
George Chesney.
H. O. Arnold-Forster.
Spenser Wilkinson.

In December, 1893, Dilke had communicated to Mr. Balfour the draft of this letter and his plan for sending it to the leaders of both parties. Mr. Balfour thought the best plan for co-ordinating the two services would be by a Defence Committee of the Cabinet, of which Dilke put his finger on the weak point, that it gave no guarantee of

meeting the requirements of war.* It was after these communications that Mr. Balfour made his speech at Manchester on January 22nd, 1894, in which he said:

"It is responsibility which is chiefly lacking in our present system. If anything goes wrong with the navy, you attack the First Lord of the Admiralty. If anything goes wrong in the army, you attack the Secretary for War. If anything goes wrong in the Home Department, you attack the Secretary to the Home Department. But if the general scheme of national and imperial defence is not properly managed, there is nobody to attack but the whole Cabinet; and the Cabinet as a whole is not, in my opinion, a very good body to carry on the detailed work of that, any more than of any other, department of the State."

These private discussions between Dilke and Mr. Balfour foreshadowed the actual course which reform was to take. It began in 1895 with the adoption of Mr. Balfour's plan of a Committee of the Cabinet; it ended in 1904 by Mr. Balfour as Prime Minister adopting Dilke's plan, and undertaking himself, as chairman of that Committee, the co-ordination of the two services. Then and not till then the fundamental principle of the primacy of the navy in the defence of the Empire was formally recognized.

The next step of the signatories to the joint letter was action in Parliament. Dilke gave notice that, on the introduction of the Army Estimates, he would move the following resolution:

"That this House, before voting supplies for the maintenance of military establishments in the United Kingdom, seeks an assurance from Her Majesty's Government that the estimates for that purpose submitted to it are framed upon consideration of possible war by sea and land, and upon a consideration of advice tendered in that behalf by such officer of either service as is fitted to command in war Her Majesty's forces of that service."

* The letters printed in Appendix I., p. 451, embody the substance of previous conversations between Dilke and Mr. Balfour. In Appendix II., p. 456, are given the replies of Mr. Gladstone and the other leaders to the joint letter, which was afterwards published in the newspapers.—ED.

The debate took place on March 16th, 1894. In the course of his speech Dilke said:

"What I want to know, and what the Cabinet in framing the estimates ought to know, is this: Are the proposals before the House those which alone are capable of securing the safety of the country and of the Empire? . . . I wish to know whether the Government present these estimates as representing the least, but still what is sufficient, for the needs of the country for the next twelve months, not only for the protection of the whole country and the Empire, but for the protection of our trade in all parts of the world. . . .

"The Cabinet must obtain the best advice possible. I, for my part, should prefer that the advice should be concentrated for each service, because I think it is far more responsible advice if it comes mainly on the responsibility of a single man as regards the army and navy respectively than if you dispersed it among a great number of people. . . . As far as I am concerned, form in this matter is immaterial. I have stated what I want to secure, and I will put two or three different ways of securing it which would very often come to the same thing. What I ventured to suggest at first was that the Prime Minister should be brought to take more personal concern in the defence of the country than is the case at the present time; that he should consider himself mainly responsible for the joint consideration of the whole defence proposals; that he should hear the Secretary for War, the First Lord of the Admiralty, and their advisers, if he is doubtful, and that they together, more seriously than has been the case in the past, should go into the difficulties of the problem, and he should then advise with them as to the estimates. . . . There was another suggestion made—that a Defence Minister, a Minister who should represent the army and navy, should be the person charged specially with the responsibility to this House. . . . But I am not wedded to any particular form. Whether the Prime Minister specially undertakes the duty, whether it is undertaken by a Defence Minister, or whether the suggestion is adopted—which, I believe, is that of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Balfour)—that a Defence Committee of the Cabinet, which I have heard was instituted by the late Government, should be provided with a more avowed and distinct position, armed with permanent responsible advisers, and equipped with records so as to hand over its work to those by whom they might be succeeded

in office—all these plans would come at the present moment to very much the same thing."

The resolution was seconded by Arnold-Forster, and supported in a clear and relevant speech by Sir George Chesney. In the debate which followed, Mr. Balfour expressed his adherence to the third of the plans described by Sir Charles Dilke. "I rather contemplate," he said, "that the Prime Minister, with or without his colleagues, or a Committee of the Cabinet, with or without the Prime Minister, should constitute themselves a body with permanent records and confidential advisers." Campbell-Bannerman expressed general agreement with the object Dilke had in view, and added: "I entertain almost identically the opinion which has been expressed by the Leader of the Opposition." Having thus obtained the concurrence of both parties to one of the plans which, it was thought, might fulfil the purpose in view, Dilke withdrew the motion.

In 1895 (March 11th) a resolution couched in the precise words of that of 1894 was moved by Mr. Arnold-Forster on the introduction of the Navy Estimates. In supporting it Dilke said:

"The sole purpose of all this very large expenditure was to enable us to achieve victory at sea, which was essential to our very existence as a nation; and what the resolution asked was an assurance that the Government had had under its consideration the nature of the efforts that would be called for to secure victory and the distribution of these efforts between the land and sea forces."

On March 15th, in the discussion of the Army Estimates, Dilke raised a doubt "whether there was in our system of military administration any security that those we put into positions of high command, where they were able to get military experience, were only those men who were fitted for such posts and would hold command in time of war."

On June 21st, 1895, Campbell-Bannerman announced the retirement of the Commander-in-Chief, the Duke of Cambridge, and his own intention to adopt the main lines

of the scheme of the Hartington Committee. He would appoint a Commander-in-Chief with reduced powers who would be the principal military adviser of the Secretary of State, and he, with the other heads of departments, who would each be directly responsible to the Minister, would constitute a deliberative Council, so that the Secretary of State, when he gave his decisions, would be guided and supported by the express opinions of all the experienced officers by whom he was surrounded.

Thereupon Mr. Brodrick, now Lord Midleton, moved to reduce the salary of the Secretary of State by way of a vote of censure on the insufficiency of the supply of cordite ammunition. A brief debate followed in which Campbell-Bannerman failed to convince the House that the supply was adequate, and in the division this vote of censure was carried by 132 against 125. This division overthrew the Liberal Ministry. Dilke took no part in the debate, but voted in the majority. For this vote Campbell-Bannerman never forgave him.

In the new Ministry formed by Lord Salisbury as Prime Minister, Mr. Balfour became First Lord of the Treasury and Leader of the House of Commons, Lord Lansdowne Secretary of State for War, Mr. Brodrick Under-Secretary of State for War, and Mr. Goschen First Lord of the Admiralty. The first act of the new Government was to remodel the general arrangements for national and imperial defence. The scheme was described in general terms by Lord Lansdowne in the House of Lords on August 26th, and more specifically by Mr. Brodrick in the House of Commons on August 31st. There was to be a Defence Committee of the Cabinet under the presidency of the Duke of Devonshire. Mr. Brodrick's words implied that the creation of this body was due to the action of Sir Charles Dilke, who, in the debate on the Address, had again urged his views on this subject.

Of the army Lord Wolseley was to be the new Commander-in-Chief. But, instead of being at the head of the military departments of the War Office, he was to have charge only

of the intelligence and mobilization departments, and to be the President of an Army Board of which the other members were to be the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General, the Director of Artillery, and the Inspector-General of Fortifications, each of whom was to be directly responsible for his own department to the Secretary of State. "The main principle of the change," said Mr. Brodrick, "is the separate responsibility of the military heads of departments to the Secretary of State for their departments, and the focussing of military opinion by means of the Army Board presided over by the Commander-in-Chief." When Mr. Brodrick had finished his statement, Dilke immediately rose and said that

"he had listened to the statement with something like dismay, for some of the changes made had been in his view entirely in the wrong direction. . . . There certainly had not been, during the many years he had been in the House, any debate in which the issues presented to the House had been so momentous. . . . To that portion of the Government's scheme which involved the position of the Duke of Devonshire in relation to Imperial defence he was fully favourable. He believed he was the original suggester of the proposal in 1888. What had been said by the Under-Secretary went to suggest the creation of a Committee of the Cabinet only, which had been formed, they were told, by the late Government. If so, the matter was minimized, and there was less security given to the country than they had hoped. The first thing to be secured was that there should be the individual responsibility of one great member of the Cabinet rather than the collective responsibility of a considerable number.

"In regard to the reorganization of the War Office itself, he viewed with dismay the further explanations given to-day by the Under-Secretary. What had been the main objection to the past management of the army in this country? It had been that responsibility had been frittered away among a great number of different Boards. . . . He hoped that the new man chosen to be the head of the army would be in practice the real head of the army and the real adviser of the Secretary of State. What he feared they were doing was to create a copy of the Admiralty in those particular points in which the Admiralty itself had been

the subject of criticism. . . . The Government, he contended, ought to recommend the one man, the Commander-in-Chief, and in the first instance take his opinion and regard him as ultimately responsible. Having picked out the most competent man, he hoped the Government would put the arrangement under that man and not under the civilian Secretary of State. . . . It was a mistake to give the Commander-in-Chief a department; he ought to be above the departments, and the departments ought to report to him. He had ventured for many years to ask in the first place that the Cabinet should consider the whole problem of Imperial defence, and in the second place that they should pick out the best man and trust him."

In reply to Dilke, Mr. Balfour said:

"If you put the Secretary of State for War in direct communication with the Commander-in-Chief alone, I do not see how the Secretary of State for War can be anything else than the administrative puppet of the great soldier who is at the head of the army. He may come down to the House and express the views of that great officer; but if he is to take official advice from the Commander-in-Chief alone, it is absolutely impossible that the Secretary of State should be really responsible, and in this House the Secretary of State will be no more than the mouthpiece of the Commander-in-Chief. It seems to me that the differences in this branch of the subject between the right hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Dilke) and the Government are of a more fundamental character than I anticipated."

The difference was indeed fundamental, for Dilke was thinking about war, and Mr. Balfour was thinking only of Ministerial responsibility. In case of a war in which the welfare, possibly the independence, of the nation would be at stake, what civilian Secretary of State would wish to be personally responsible for victory or defeat, or to be more than the mouthpiece of a great soldier at the head of the army?

The Commander-in-Chief had been a military officer whose function was to co-ordinate the work of the heads of the several military departments. The change made in 1895 transferred to the Secretary of State this duty previously performed by the Commander-in-Chief. Sir James Stephen's

Commission had reported in 1887 that it was morally and physically impossible that any one man should satisfactorily discharge the functions which at that time belonged to the Secretary of State. To them in 1895 the Government added those of the Commander-in-Chief. The result was that in 1899 the Secretary of State failed to fulfil the most important of all his functions, that of maintaining accord between the policy of the Cabinet and the military preparations. The Committee of Defence, which was appointed in 1895, might perhaps have performed this essential function if it had ever taken a serious view of its work. But it is doubtful whether it ever did any work at all.

II.

In the new Parliament, Dilke moved on March 5th, 1896, for a return of the number of British seamen available for service in the navy in time of war.

"One difficulty," he said, "that had to be faced was that in debates like the present they had no real opportunity of engaging in a collective review of the whole defensive expenditure of the country on the army and navy taken together. . . . They expected from the Government a policy which could be explained to the House—either a policy of alliances, to which he himself was rootedly opposed; or the policy, which was the only true policy for this country, of keeping up such a fleet as would make us safe against any probable combination. The point to which he wished to draw most urgent attention was that the real reserve of England was disappearing very fast. The British sailor was becoming more and more a rare article of luxury. He was used on the first-class liners, and not used elsewhere. . . . There was another point of importance. Among these foreigners there were many masters of ships, and they were taught the pilotage of our rivers. That was a very serious matter, and might become a great danger in time of war."

It soon became evident that the changes made in 1895 had not produced improvement either in the Government's arrangements for national defence or in the management

of the army. In November, 1896, Lord Lansdowne, Secretary of State for War, and Sir Michael Hicks Beach, Chancellor of the Exchequer, made speeches the same evening at Bristol. The Secretary of State expressed the intention to make a slight increase in the number of battalions in the army, while the Chancellor declared that he would consent to no increase in the Army Estimates until he could feel more confidence in the manner in which the money was expended. This disagreement between members of the Cabinet led to inquiries, through which Dilke became aware that the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Wolseley, wished for a larger increase in the number of battalions than the Secretary of State was willing to propose. The opportunity seemed suitable for raising the question whether or not the military measures proposed by the Government were those suggested by their military adviser—a fundamental question. Lord Lansdowne having explained in the House of Lords in February, 1897, that his proposal was to add two battalions to the Guards and one to the Cameron Highlanders, and that he hoped in this way to restore the equilibrium between the number of battalions at home and the number abroad, Dilke in the House of Commons pointed out (February 8th) that the measure proposed would not establish the desired equilibrium, and that the proposal was anonymous. Who, he asked, were the military authorities on whose advice the Government relied? Mr. Brodrick, in reply, said that the proposals of the Government, taken as a whole, had been gratefully accepted by one and all of the military heads of the War Office, as, in the words of the Commander-in-Chief, "such a step forward as has not been made for many years." Thus it became clear that the military heads, including the Commander-in-Chief, were as ready to be overruled in regard to their views as to what was necessary for the army as the civilian Minister was to overrule them.

In the Christmas recess of 1897-98 Dilke prepared for the next Session by writing a pamphlet on Army Reform in which he reviewed the position. He and the other

reformers had steadily asserted that the home army could not take the field until it had drawn heavily on the reserve; that it was terribly short of artillery; that the seven to eight years' enlistment was a hybrid, and that the sound course was to have a short-term service with the colours at home followed by a choice between a long term in the reserve and a long term in the Indian or Colonial army; and, lastly, that the administration was over-centralized at the War Office, to the detriment of the authority, the efficiency, and the character, of the generals. The critics had further urged that the linked-battalion system and the hybrid term, bad as they were, could not be worked at all without a large increase of the number of battalions at home. In 1897 the War Office had replied that an increase of three battalions would suffice.

The new estimates were introduced in the House of Commons on February 25th, 1898, by Mr. Brodrick, who admitted that, in order to put 50,000 infantry into the field, it would be necessary to call out 28,000 reservists. In order to have artillery enough for a fraction of the army he asked for fifteen more batteries. He had to admit that the three battalions added in 1897 were not enough, and to ask for six more. The speech was an admission of all the contentions of the critics, though it began by abusing them.

In the debate Dilke moved: "That no scheme for the reorganization of the army will be satisfactory which involves the sacrifice of one unit to secure the efficiency of any other." He referred to the admitted breakdown of the eight-years and linked-battalion system. Mr. Brodrick, quoting Lord Wolseley, had reassured the country by telling them that they could despatch two army corps abroad.

"Two army corps!" exclaimed Dilke, "when it is twenty army corps which this country pays for! . . . Out of the men at home, if cavalry and artillery were provided, twenty corps instead of two corps might be made. . . . In the last three years the cost of the army has been considerably increased, and there has been an increase in numbers voted. Yet there has been a decrease not only in the militia,

but also in the regular army and in the army reserve as well during that period—an additional evidence of breakdown. . . . The territorial system here can never be anything more than a sham so long as we have to provide for India and garrison coaling-stations, and so long as the battalions are constantly moved about. . . . We have year by year made our statements with regard to artillery to the House. Nobody believed a word we said, and it was only last year, when three batteries were sent out to the Cape, and twenty batteries wrecked in men and horses to provide them, that the War Office at last admitted that we had all along been right. . . . On this occasion we see some results, in the speech of the right hon. gentleman to-night, of our action in the past."

The Navy Estimates were introduced in July. Lord Charles Beresford in his argument had pointed out that the cost of the navy bore a much smaller proportion to our mercantile marine than that of the navies of other countries. Dilke said:

"The position of the British Empire is such that, if by the mercantile policy of other countries our mercantile marine were wholly to disappear, or if it were to disappear as the result of a war in which our carrying trade passed, say, to the United States, it would be just as necessary as now for us to have a predominant fleet. . . . If the pressure of taxation on the poorer classes, if the unrest in this country on the subject, were so great that it was not possible to make the sacrifices which I for one think it necessary to make, I would sooner give up the whole expenditure on the army than give way upon this naval programme. . . . This matter of the fleet is vital to our position in the world. The army is an arguable question."

Dilke continued steadily to press for a strong navy. In 1899 he once more supported Mr. Goschen's proposals, and again urged that, if the cost of the army and navy should be too great, we must save on the army, but not on the navy. His chief criticism of the Admiralty was that "we have got into the vicious position of beginning our building programme each year at the extreme end of the financial year."

The keynote of his speech was: "This Empire is an Empire of the seas, and the navy is vital to our existence, but our army is not. Our Indian army is vital to our possession of India, but India pays the full cost of it, perhaps rather more."

III.

During the winter of 1898-99 the opposition of purposes between the British Government and the Government of the South African Republic was causing grave apprehension to public men. The High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, paid a visit to England, and on his return to the Cape was authorized in May, 1899, to meet President Kruger in a Conference at Bloemfontein. On June 7th the failure of the Conference was announced, and was thought by many to be the equivalent of a diplomatic rupture, the prelude to hostilities. No serious military preparations were made by the British Government, though various measures were suggested by the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Wolseley, and by Sir Redvers Buller. It was not until September 10th that 10,000 men were ordered from India to Natal, and not until October 7th that orders were issued for the calling out of the reserve and for the mobilization of an army corps and other troops for South Africa. The Boers began hostilities on October 11th, and the operations were unfavourable to the British until the middle of February, when Lord Roberts began the advance towards Kimberley.

At the end of January, 1900, the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, said in the House of Lords: "I do not believe in the perfection of the British Constitution as an instrument of war . . . it is evident that there is something in your machinery that is wrong."

In the debate on the Army Estimates on February 1st, Dilke, with his usual courage, raised the question of responsibility, in a speech to which little attention was paid at the time, but which will now, in the light of subsequent events, be better appreciated.

"The country," he said, "has gone through an awful winter, and under our constitutional system there are persons responsible, and we have to examine the nature of their responsibility. Some Government speakers, who during the recess have addressed the country, have drawn certain comparisons between the occurrences in this war and those of the Crimean War. . . . I confess that I believe the present war has been far more disgracefully conducted than the Crimean War had been, and that the mourning is far more applicable to this case. Now, with regard to the checks or reverses—that is the accepted phrase—we are really afraid in these days to talk about 'disasters.' The First Lord of the Treasury at Manchester distinctly stated there had been 'no disaster.' There has been no single great engagement in which we have met with an absolute disaster, but for the first time in our military history there has been a succession of checks or reverses—unredeemed as they have been by a single great military success in the whole course of the war—in many of which we have left prisoners in the enemy's hands. We began with the abandonment of the entrenched camp at Dundee, and of the great accumulation of stores that had been made there, of the wounded, and of the dying General, and we lost the headquarters of a regiment of cavalry that tried a cavalry pursuit. We lost the headquarters of two battalions at Nicholson's Nek; we lost the headquarters of one battalion and a very large portion of another battalion in the repulse at Stormberg; we lost the Colonel, most of the field officers, and the whole of one company of the Suffolks, on another occasion. These headquarters of cavalry, and the principal portion of the remaining men of five battalions of British infantry, are now prisoners at Pretoria—not to speak of what happened to the Highland Brigade at Magersfontein, or of the loss of the guns in the repulse at the Tugela, or of the fact that thirteen of our field guns, besides a mountain battery, are now in the enemy's hands. The loss of guns in proportion to our small strength of guns is equivalent to the loss of some 300 guns by the German army. None of these events constitutes what the First Lord of the Treasury calls a disaster. Probably he is right. But can any member of this House deny that the net result of these proceedings has been disastrous to the belief of the world in our ability to conduct a war? Therefore, if there has been, as the right hon. gentleman says, not one disaster, surely the result of the proceedings has been one disastrous to the credit of this

country. There has been one immense redemption of that disaster, which is that all the Powers, however hostile, have very frankly acknowledged on these occasions the heroism of the officers and men. Our military reputation, which undoubtedly never stood lower in the eyes of the world than at the present moment, is redeemed in that respect, and the individual courage of officers and men never stood higher in the estimate of the world than it does now. It seems to me to be a patriotic duty of those who have in the past discussed in this House the question of Cabinet responsibility for military preparations to discuss the question now; to see who is responsible, whom—I will not say we will hang, but whom we are to hold blameworthy in the highest degree for what has occurred. I believe that the opinion is attributed to the Prime Minister that the British Constitution is not a fighting machine. I am told that he has thrown doubt upon the working of the British Constitution as a Constitution which will allow this country successfully to go to war. That is a very serious matter. The Constitution of this country has been maintained as a fighting machine by the members of this House who are now responsible for the Administration. No one has ever put the doctrine of Cabinet responsibility for the preparation for war higher than it has always been put by the present Leader of the House (Mr. Balfour), and anything more direct than the conflict on that point, as on many others, between his opinion and the opinion of the Prime Minister it is impossible to conceive. . . . On Thursday last the right hon. member who preceded me in this debate—the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick)—delivered a speech and said that all that had been done in this war had been 'solely dictated by military advice,' and 'military advice alone determined all that had been done.' I should like the House to consider what that statement means. The right hon. gentleman was the member who, on three occasions, brought the question of the ammunition supplies of this country before the House: it was he who moved the amendment which turned out the Rosebery Administration on the cordite vote, and he led the discussion on two subsequent occasions on which we debated the same question. At the opening of the next Parliament the whole question of Ministerial responsibility for war preparation was thoroughly and exhaustively considered by this House. I confess that I did not expect to hear the right hon. gentleman—who on those three occasions so firmly pressed, to

the very extinction of the Government itself, the doctrine of Cabinet responsibility—as it were sheltering the Cabinet behind military advice, advice which he rejected, as also did the Leader of the House, with scorn upon that occasion. . . . I feel it a duty to myself, and to all who hold the same opinion, to press home this doctrine of Cabinet responsibility on this occasion. In that debate the hon. member who seems likely to follow me in this debate—the present Under-Secretary for War (Mr. Wyndham)—took part. He was then a private member and warmly occupied his mind upon this question, and he used these words: 'If they were overwhelmed by disasters, the Minister for War would be held responsible.' Not only he, but the whole Cabinet are responsible, and the present Leader of the House, in following the hon. member in that debate, emphasized that fact, and pointed out the importance of complete Cabinet responsibility. That doctrine was emphatically maintained. There are practical reasons why this question should be pressed home on this occasion. This is obviously the time to press it home if ever it should be done, and it seems to me that such practical reasons are to be found in two considerations. We have been told that at the beginning of every war it is always fated that there should be muddling. We have been told it from both sides of the House, that we always begin by muddling our wars. If there is one fact more certain than another, it is that in future wars, not with Boer Republics, but with Great Powers, there will be no time for muddling at the beginning of war, and it is vital that this muddling should be guarded against. If we are to look forward as a matter of certainty that this country is always to muddle at the beginning of a war, then we may look forward with almost certainty to defeat."

Dilke then examined the excuses that had been made for the Government, to the effect that the war took them by surprise and that they had no knowledge of the Boer preparations. He showed that both these pleas were inconsistent with the facts. Mr. Balfour had said that the Government had thought it their duty, during the negotiations which preceded the war, to abstain from unnecessary menace. Dilke pointed out that they did not so abstain. Lord Salisbury had said on July 28th, 1899, "the Conventions are mortal . . . they are liable to be destroyed." That could

only be understood by the Boers as holding out the prospect of a war in which the independence of their country would be taken away. Were these words wise when used without the smallest preparation for war having been made? As regards knowledge of the Boer preparations, the Intelligence Department had admirably done its work. No Government was ever so well informed as to the resources of its opponents as the British Government in entering upon this war. Dilke went on to say:

"Both by those who would have anticipated war and by the Government it has been alleged that the existence of a Parliamentary Opposition was the reason why the military precautions of the Government were inefficacious. But the Government has been in power since July, 1895, and has been supported by overwhelming majorities, and it would have had the cheerful acquiescence of the House of Commons for every measure of military precaution and all the military expenditure which was asked. The Cabinet are responsible; but if there is to be any difficulty on account of the existence of a constitutional Opposition—even a weak one—I say that by that doctrine we are fated to be beaten on every occasion we go to war. The time for the reform of our military system will come when this war has ended. We cannot reform it in a time of war. We have often addressed the House upon this subject. We preached to deaf ears. We were not listened to before war. Shall we be listened to when war is over? While I admit that in a time of war you cannot reform your military system, what you can do is to press home to the Cabinet the responsibility. . . . For some years past there have been discussions as to Empire expansion which have divided some of us from others on military questions. There are some of us, who are strong supporters of the Government in preparing for war in the present situation of the world, who are not in favour of what is called the expansion of the Empire. We have resisted it because we believed the military requirements of the Empire were greater—as it was put by Lord Charles Beresford, whom we see here no longer—than we were prepared to meet. And the Government now come down to the House and quietly tell us that that is so. They have put it in the Queen's Speech. We have it stated that, although the money we have to spend in military preparations is more than that of any other Power in the world, we are going to

be asked to spend more. I should hope that good may come out of evil, and that a result of this sad war may be the proper utilization of our resources in preparing, in times of peace, all the military forces of what people call Greater Britain. . . . I venture to say that the Government went into this war without the preparation they should have made. Their neglect of that precaution has brought about the reverses we have met with, and the natural consequence is the failure of our arms I have described. As regards the Crimean War, which in some respects has been compared with this, one is reminded of the present Commander-in-Chief, who has written these momentous words: The history of the Crimean War shows 'how an army may be destroyed by a Ministry through want of ordinary forethought.' I confess that I think there is only one point in which the two cases are exactly parallel—for there are many distinctions between them—and that is in the heroism of officers and men."

On July 27th, 1900, on the occasion of a supplementary estimate for the South African War, Dilke criticized the censorship of letters from the front, in consequence of which the truth about the military mistakes made remained unknown. He reviewed a series of blunders that had been made in the war, and quoted the opinion of an eminent foreign strategist to the effect that "the mistakes which had been made were mistakes on immutable and permanent principles." Thus, there was a doubt whether the army had been properly trained for war in the past and was being properly trained at that moment. He asked for a full inquiry into these matters.

That inquiry was never made. The Royal Commission appointed after the war to inquire into its conduct began by disclaiming authority to inquire into the policy out of which the war arose, and by asserting its own incompetence to discuss the military operations.

In a paper contributed to the *New Liberal Review* of February, 1901, Dilke reviewed the South African War, and summed up:

"The war, then, has revealed deficiency in the war training of the Staff in particular, and of the army generally. It

has shown that the recommendations of the Commander-in-Chief to the Cabinet for the nomination of Generals to high commands were not based on real tests. It has called attention to the amateurishness of portions of our forces. It has proved that for years the reformers have been right, and the War Office wrong, as regards the number and proportion of guns needed by us and the rapidity of the mobilization of our artillery.

"Remedies which will certainly be attempted are—Better training of the Staff, especially in the thinking out and writing of orders; weeding out of incompetent amateurs from among our officers; better pay for the men; careful preparation in time of peace of a picked Imperial force of mounted infantry from all parts of the Empire. But greater changes, urgently as they are demanded by the national interest, will not be accomplished, as public excitement will die down, and triflers and obstructives will remain at the head of affairs, in place of the Carnot who is needed as organizer to back the best General that can be found for the Commander-in-Chief.

"The greatest of the lessons of the war was the revelation of the neglect, by statesmen, to prepare for wars which their policy must lead them to contemplate as possible. . . . The long duration of the war, with all its risks to our Imperial interests, is to be laid at the door of the politicians rather than of the Generals. This, the greatest lesson, has not been learnt."

IV.

After the General Election of December, 1900, there was a shifting of offices in the Cabinet, by which Mr. Brodrick succeeded Lord Lansdowne as Secretary of State for War, and Lord Selborne became First Lord of the Admiralty instead of Mr. Goschen. Lord Roberts was brought home from South Africa to become Commander-in-Chief, and the direction of the war was left in the hands of Lord Kitchener. The first important event in the new Parliament was a speech by Lord Wolseley in the House of Lords, in which he warned the nation against the dangerous consequences of the system introduced in 1895, which failed to give its proper place to the military judgment in regard to preparations for war. The warning was disregarded. Mr.

Brodrick announced the determination of the Government to maintain the system set up in 1895, and to give to Lord Roberts as Commander-in-Chief the same position of maimed and crippled authority as had been given to Lord Wolseley six years before.

Mr. Brodrick, while carrying on the war in South Africa, attempted at the same time to reform the army. The results were the more unfortunate because on vital matters, both of organization at the War Office and of the reorganization of the army, Mr. Brodrick insisted on overriding the great soldier to whom, as Commander-in-Chief, was due whatever confidence the country gave to the military administration. Mr. Brodrick was much preoccupied with the defence of the United Kingdom against invasion. In the debate on the Army Estimates of 1901, Dilke said:

"I am one of those who hold that the command of the seas is the defence of this country. I believe that the British Army exists mainly for the reinforcement of the Indian garrison, and, if necessary, as the rudiment of that army which, in the event of a great war, would be necessary."

Dilke continued to support the Admiralty in its endeavours to strengthen the navy. In the debate on the Navy Estimates of 1901 (March 22nd) he said:

"The Secretary of State for the Colonies a few years ago made a speech in favour of an alliance with a military Power.* He said that the alternative was to build up so as to make ourselves safe against a combination of three Powers, and that that would entail an addition of fifty per cent. to the estimates. Since that time we have added more than fifty per cent. to our estimates. Of course the expenditure is very great; but is there a man in this House who believes that it is not necessary for us to maintain that practical standard which would lead even three Powers to hesitate before attacking? During the last year we have, happily, had friendship between ourselves and Germany; I believe that friendship may long continue, and I hope it will. But it is impossible to shut our eyes to the fact that there have been distinctly proposed to the German Houses, by Admiral Tirpitz, estimates which are based on the possibility of a

* See *infra*, p. 491.

war with England. Von der Goltz, who is the highest literary authority on this subject, has said the same thing. We have seen also that remarkable preparation of strategic cables on the part of Germany . . . in order to be entirely independent of British cables in the event of a possible naval war. In face of facts of that kind, which can be infinitely multiplied, it seems to me it would be monstrous on our part to fail to maintain that standard, and that it is our bounden duty to make up for the delays which have occurred, and to vote programmes for the future which should be sufficient to keep up that standard."

When the Navy Estimates for 1902 were introduced into the House of Commons by Arnold-Forster as Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, Mr. Lough moved an amendment: "That the growing expenditure on the naval defences of the Empire imposes under the existing conditions an undue burden on the taxpayers of the United Kingdom." Dilke, in opposing the amendment, deprecated the introduction of party considerations into a discussion concerning the navy. The time taken to build ships ought to be borne in mind. The usual period had lately been four years; many of the ships of the 1897 programme had not yet been commissioned; therefore it was necessary to remember that the country would go into a naval war with ships according to the programme of four or five years before war was declared. Mr. Goschen was a careful First Lord of the Admiralty, yet Mr. Goschen in his programme year after year alluded to the necessity of maintaining a fleet which would cause not two but three Powers to pause before they attacked us. To his (Dilke's) mind, it was infinitely more important to the country that its expenditure should be shaped, not towards meeting a sudden attack by two Powers, which was not going to occur, but towards meeting—not immediately, but in time to come—the possibility of an eventual joining together of three Powers, one of which was very rapidly building a magnificent fleet. From that point of view the programme of the Government this year was a beggarly programme.

In introducing the Navy Estimates for 1903 Arnold-

Forster said that they were of a magnitude unparalleled in peace or war. Dilke, in supporting them, said (March 17th):

"The standard which Lord Spencer gave to this House was not a fleet equivalent to three fleets—not a fleet, certainly, on all points equivalent to the fleets of France, Germany, and Russia—but a standard which gave us such a position in the world of fleets as would cause three Powers to pause before they entered into a coalition against us. That was a position he had always contended was necessary for the safety of this country. . . . The only weak point that one could discern as really dangerous in the future was the training of the officers for high command and the selection of officers, which would give this country, in the event of war, that real unity of operations which ought to be our advantage against any allied Powers."

V.

On June 20th, 1902, Lord Charles Beresford had raised the question of the organization of the Admiralty, which he held to be defective for the purpose of preparation for war. "The administrative faculty," he said, "should be absolutely separate from the executive faculty, but at present they were mixed up." Campbell-Bannerman held that no change was necessary. Dilke supported Lord Charles Beresford, and after reviewing the cordite debates of 1895, to which both the previous speakers had referred, gave his reasons for holding that the duty of the Cabinet was to control both services in order to secure that each should take its proper share in defence. "If there was a very strong man, or even one who thought himself very strong, at the head of either department, the present system tended to break down, because, unless there was some joint authority in the Cabinet strong enough to control even a strong First Lord of the Admiralty, no joint consideration of the views of the two departments could be obtained. At the present moment the two services competed." Lord Charles Beresford and Dilke were supported by Sir John Colomb, and in his reply Arnold-Forster said: "I cannot but reaffirm the belief I

held before I stood at this table, and since I have stood here, that there is a need for some reinforcement of the intellectual equipment which directs or ought to direct the enormous forces of our Empire." The question was raised again on August 6th by Major Seely, in a speech in which he commented on the lack of a body charged with the duty of studying strategical questions. Mr. Balfour thereupon said:

"We cannot leave this matter to one department or two departments acting separately. It is a joint matter; it must be a joint matter. I hope my honourable friend will take it from me that the Government are fully alive, and have, if I may say so, long been fully alive, to the difficulty of the problem which presents itself to his mind and which he has explained to the House; and that that problem is one always present to our minds. It is one which we certainly do not mean to neglect to meet and grapple with to the best of our ability."

In 1903, in an article contributed to the Northern Newspaper Syndicate, Dilke wrote:

"We are face to face with the fact that Mr. Brodrick's scheme is admitted from all sides, except by those actually responsible for it who are still holding office, to be a failure; that under this scheme the charge on the British Empire for defence in time of peace stands at eighty-six millions sterling, of which fifty-two millions at least are for land defence, nevertheless ill secured; that without a complete change of system these gigantic figures must rapidly increase; and that, while all agree that in our case the navy ought to be predominant, no one seems to be able to control the War Office, or to limit the expenditure upon land defence as contrasted with naval preparations. The service members of the House of Commons, who used to be charged with wasting their own and the nation's time upon military details, or upon proposals for increase of expenditure, have shown their patriotism and their intelligence by going to the root of this great question. They brought about the declaration of the Secretary of the Admiralty, Mr. Arnold-Forster, on June 20th, 1902, and the complete acceptance of that declaration by the Prime Minister on August 6th. They have now forced on Parliament and on the Prime Minister the necessity of taking real action upon his declaration that 'the problem

of Imperial defence cannot be left to one department or two departments acting separately.' The utilization of the resources of the British Empire for war must be the business of the Prime Minister, who is above the War Office and the Admiralty, and who alone can lead the Cabinet to co-ordinate the efforts of the two services."

In October, 1903, Arnold-Forster was appointed to succeed Mr. Brodrick as Secretary of State for War. He had previously expressed, in conversation, his wish to see the whole subject of Imperial defence entrusted to a Committee of three men conversant with it, and had named Sir Charles Dilke and Sir John Colomb as two of the three whom he would choose if he had the power. In November a Committee of three was appointed by Mr. Balfour to report on the organization of the War Office. Its members were Lord Esher, Admiral Sir John (now Lord) Fisher, and Sir George Sydenham Clarke (now Lord Sydenham). The first instalment of this Committee's report, published on February 1st, 1904, proposed the reconstitution of the War Office on the model of the Board of Admiralty, and as a preliminary the dismissal of the Commander-in-Chief and the heads of the great departments at the War Office.

At the same time the Cabinet Committee of Defence was reconstituted under the presidency of the Prime Minister (Mr. Balfour). Thus at length, eleven years after Sir Charles Dilke's first conversations with Mr. Balfour on the subject, was adopted the suggestion he had urged for so many years, and so fully explained in his speech of March 16th, 1894, that a Prime Minister should undertake to consider the needs both of the army and navy, and the probable functions of both in war.

VI.

The result was very soon manifest in a complete change of policy, which was no doubt facilitated by the presence in the Cabinet, as Secretary of State for War, of Mr. Arnold-Forster, one of the signatories of the joint letter of 1894.

On March 28th, 1905, Arnold-Forster said:

"We have been adding million after million to our naval expenditure. Are all these millions wasted? If it be true, as we are told by representatives of the Admiralty, that the navy is in a position such as it has never occupied before—that it is now not only our first line of defence, but our guarantee for the possession of our own islands—is that to make no difference to a system which has grown up avowedly and confessedly on the basis of defending these islands by an armed land force against an invasion? Is that to make no difference? Is this view some invention of my own imagination? No, sir, that is the deliberate conclusion of the Government, advised by a body which has been called into, I believe, a useful existence during the last eighteen months, and which I regret was not called into existence much longer ago—the Committee of Defence. . . . I have seen it stated that, provided our navy is sufficient, the greatest anticipation we can form in the way of a landing of a hostile army would be a force of 5,000. I should be deceiving the House if I thought that represented the extreme naval view. The extreme naval view is that the crew of a dinghy could not land in this country in the face of the navy."

This speech showed the conversion of the Government, for which Sir Charles Dilke had laboured so long, to the doctrine of the primacy of the navy and of defence by the command of the sea.

On May 11th, Mr. Balfour in the name of the Committee of Defence put forth the general view which that body had reached. In the first place, provided the navy was efficient, a successful invasion of the country upon a large scale need not be contemplated. Secondly, the Committee had gone on the broad line that our force should as far as possible be concentrated at the centre of the Empire. This had rendered unnecessary expenditure which had been undertaken under a different view of our needs, the most notable case being the works at St. Lucia, which had been made by Lord Carnarvon into a great naval base. Lastly, with regard to India, the Government adopted Lord Kitchener's view that in addition to drafts there should be available in the relatively early stages of the war eight divisions of infantry and other corresponding arms.

Dilke, who had described himself as a constant supporter of the blue-water view, agreed with the Government with regard to invasion, and welcomed Mr. Balfour's moderate view with regard to the needs of India. But he pointed out that vast sums of money had been spent in the fortification of places which were now discovered to be unnecessary.

"He asked the Committee to remember how far the responsibility of all this expenditure had been on the present occupants of office. He believed that the Defence Committee of the Cabinet was created by Lord Rosebery at the end of his Administration in 1895. That was the first form of the Committee. Immediately the new Government came in it assumed its second form, and the Defence Committee of the Conservative Government, formed in 1895 under the presidency of the Duke of Devonshire, lasted for many years, and was composed of substantially the same gentlemen as were in power now. It was constantly vouched to the House as the great co-ordinating authority, and as the body responsible for expenditure on an enormous scale on principles diametrically opposed to those now held. The third form of the Committee was that which was adopted when the Prime Minister acceded to his present office. The right hon. gentleman came to this House and at once explained the new form of the Committee on March 5th, 1903. . . . The Committee had heard to-day the extent to which invasion at home was believed in by the Defence Committee. . . . It was firmly expected from the moment that the Government announced their naval view that the reduction would be under the military head. But instead of that the reduction had been on the Navy Estimates, and that had not been accompanied by a reduction on the army votes. That had been the amazing effect of the co-ordination. Had any member of the Committee calculated how much money had been wasted in the last nine and a half years by the non-adoption in 1895, when virtually the present Government came into office, of the policy which had been adopted now ?'

VII.

The Government which had thus tardily followed Sir Charles Dilke's lead had lost the confidence of the country. The General Election of 1905 gave the Liberals a large

majority. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the new Prime Minister, had not forgotten Dilke's vote in the cordite division of 1895, and did not share his view of the necessity to be ready for war, and to rely, not upon arbitration, but upon the organization of defensive preparations. Dilke was not included in the new Ministry, in which Mr. (now Lord) Haldane was appointed Secretary of State for War. Mr. Haldane undertook a fresh reorganization of the military forces of the country, taking the Committee of Defence and the Army Council as they were left by Mr. Balfour after the changes proposed by the Esher Committee. The Order in Council gave the Secretary of State the power to reserve for his own decision any matter whatever, and to impose that decision upon the Army Council, a power not contemplated by the Esher Committee's report. Mr. Haldane availed himself of this power and of the assistance of Colonel Ellison, who had been Secretary to the Esher Committee, but was not a member of the Army Council, to prepare his scheme. It consisted in the organization of an expeditionary force, which was to be composed of six divisions and a cavalry division, with a total field strength of 160,000 men, fully equipped for war, together with additional troops at home to make good the losses of a campaign. This force was to be made up of the regular army (of which the establishments were reduced by some 20,000 of all arms), of its reserve, and of the militia, renamed special reserve, also with a reduced establishment, and with a liability to serve abroad in case of war. The Volunteer force was to be renamed the Territorial force, and its officers and men to be brought under the Army Act, the men to be enlisted for a term of years and paid. It was to be organized, as the Norfolk Commission had suggested, into brigades and divisions. But the further suggestion of the same Commission, that a member of the Army Council familiar with the volunteer system should be charged with its supervision, was not adopted. Mr. Haldane's view was that the territorial troops could not in peace receive a training which would prepare them for war, but that, as England was not a Continental Power and was protected by

her navy, there would be six months' time, after a war had begun, to give them a training for war. The force was to be administered by County Associations to be constituted for the purpose. The scheme was gradually elaborated, and in its later stage improved by the transformation of the University and some other volunteer and cadet corps into officers' training corps. The works which, at the suggestion of Sir John Ardagh, had been prepared for the defence of London were abandoned.

Mr. Haldane first expounded his plans in March, 1906, and in the debate of March 15th Dilke said:

"There was a little too much depreciation of the Volunteers; and although he had always been considered a strong supporter of the 'blue-water' view, yet he had always believed in accepting from the Volunteers all the service they could give, as he believed they would give an enormous potential supply of men."

Mr. Haldane explained (February 25th, 1907) that the expeditionary force would require only seventy-two batteries, while the army actually had a hundred and five; there was therefore a surplus of thirty-three batteries which he would use as training batteries in which to train men for divisional ammunition columns. Upon this Dilke's comment was that "if the officer difficulty could be solved, then the real military problem would be solved." We could raise men fast enough through the volunteer system, and turn them into good infantry, provided there was a sufficient supply of officers qualified to train them; but the infantry which could thus be produced in a few months would require to be supplemented by artillery and cavalry which could not be improvised. He would have faced the cost of keeping up these arms, and would not have saved by turning batteries into ammunition columns.

In the debate on Mr. Haldane's Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill (June 3rd), Dilke voted for an amendment of which the purpose was to establish a department at the War Office under an officer having special knowledge and experience with the militia, yeomanry, and volunteers,

ranking as third member of the Army Council. This amendment, however, was not carried.

In an article in the *Manchester Guardian* of June 6th, 1907, Dilke explained his main objections to Mr. Haldane's scheme and to the Bill which was to lay its foundation.

"The cost," he wrote, "must undoubtedly be large, and it is difficult to see where the substantial saving on Army Estimates, twice promised by Mr. Ritchie when Chancellor of the Exchequer, but not yet secured, is to be obtained. As an advocate of a strong fleet, I have a special reason, equivalent to that of the most rigid economist, for insisting upon the reduction in our enormous military charge, inasmuch as the money unexpectedly needed for the army will come off the fleet."

Dilke thought that the defence of Great Britain depended upon the navy; that so long as the navy was equal to its task invasion was not to be feared. The function of the military forces would be to fight an enemy abroad. He, therefore, held it a mistake to increase expenditure on troops which it was not proposed to train to meet foreign regulars. The Territorial army would be the volunteers under a new name, but without an improved training. As the linked-battalion system and the long term of service were retained, the regular army would still be costly, and its reserves or power of quick expansion less than they might be. Mr. Haldane would be compelled to retain a high rate of War Office expenditure, and this would involve a reduction on the outlay for the navy, which was all-important. Mr. Haldane, however, had the support of a very large majority, and argument was of little avail. Sir Charles Dilke therefore threw his weight into the debates on the Navy estimates, in which he consistently supported the Admiralty in every increase.

Year after year he persevered in the effort to counteract the tendency to exaggerate the importance of military schemes and military expenditure, especially upon troops not fully trained and not kept ready for action abroad, and to point out that the effect of such schemes could not but

be to reduce the amount of attention and of money devoted to the navy. In 1904 (March 1st) he had said:

"It was an extraordinary fact that, in all calculations on the subject of the expenditure of the army, the cost of the army outside the United Kingdom was never taken into account. We were spending vastly more upon the land services than we were upon our naval services, and so long as that was so he confessed that he should view with more than indulgence what was called the extravagant policy in regard to the navy."

In 1907 (March 5th) he expressed his disapproval of the sweeping change by which the defence of ports by submarine mines had been abolished. "Newcastle had been defended by means of an admirable system of submarine mines which had no equal in the world. So good was it that the volunteer submarine miners of the Tyne division were employed to do the laying of electric mines at Portsmouth and other naval ports. Newcastle was now without that defence." He explained that these mines, which had cost a million, had been sold. Had they fetched £50,000? He was not content with Mr. Haldane's account of the steps taken to prepare for defence against possible raid. On this subject, writing for the *United Service Magazine* of May, 1908, a paper entitled "Strong at all Points," which enforced his view of the supreme importance of the navy, he said:

"The provision for time of war, after complete mobilization of the Territorial army, may be perfect upon paper; but the real question is, how to obtain the manning of the quick-firing guns, say on the Tyne, in time of political complication, by trained men, who sleep by the guns and are able to use them when awakened suddenly in the dead of night."

In the discussion of the estimates of July 31st, 1907, he said that, "bearing in mind the enormous importance in naval matters of a steady policy, he should resist any reduction that might be moved." On the same occasion he pointed out that, "if there was any danger from Germany, it was not the danger of invasion or from the fleet, but it was her growing superiority in the scientific equipment of

her people." Yet he declined to encourage panic, and in the debate of March 22nd, 1909, when the Opposition moved a vote of censure because of a supposed unforeseen start gained by Germany in shipbuilding, pointed out the reasons for not indulging in a scare.

Dilke closely watched the new developments in armament and construction, and from time to time pressed them upon the attention of the Government. As early as 1901, in an article reviewing the progress of war in the nineteenth century, he had said: "The greatest change in the battlefields of the future, as compared with those of a few years ago, will be found in the developments and increased strength of the artillery." In 1907, in the debate on the Navy estimates, he suggested that "the reserve of guns was a matter which needed the utmost diligence." Docks, he thought, were proportionately more important than battleships. In 1907 (April 25th) he said: "A base was needed east of Dover—Rosyth or Chatham: he need not suggest or criticize the spot that should be chosen. Whether the Hague Conference prohibited floating mines or not, they would be used; and that being so, they must contemplate either the extension of Chatham or the creation of an establishment at a different point of the east coast." To this subject he repeatedly returned. In 1908 (March 3rd): "The necessity for a large establishment in a safer place than the Channel had been raised for many years, and was fully recognized when Rosyth was brought before them. Both parties had shirked the expenditure which both declared necessary." On March 10th: "There were important works, docks and basins in which big ships could be accommodated, and these by universal admission should be made as rapidly as possible. Big ships were worse than useless if there was no dock or basin accommodation for them. . . . The limited instalment of one dock and one basin contemplated was only to be completed in eleven years. He believed that was bad economy. . . . The need for this expenditure had long been foreseen." Again, in 1909, on July 1st, he pointed out that the Governments of both parties had shirked the ex-

penditure on Rosyth, of which the need had been known as early as 1902. The delay had been enormously grave. The report which contained the whole scheme had been presented to Parliament in January, 1902; the land had been bought in 1903, and the contract was made only in March, 1909.

Sir Charles's command of detail made his hearers apt to suppose that he was mainly concerned with technical matters. But no impression could be farther from the truth. Never for a moment did he lose sight of the large issues, and of the purpose to which all measures of naval and military preparation are directed. It was to the large issues that his last important Parliamentary speech on the subject of defence was directed.

"We talk a little," he said on March 7th, 1910, "about the possibility of invasion when we talk of our Territorial army, but we do not—the overwhelming majority of us—believe the country is open to invasion, or that the fleet has fallen off in its power of doing its duty as compared with days past. . . . No one of us who is prepared to pay his part, and to call upon others to pay their part, to keep the fleet up to the highest standard of efficiency and safety which we at present enjoy—no one of us ought to be prepared to run the Territorial army on this occasion as though it were the main and most costly portion of the estimates that are put before the House. The Territorial army is defensible as the Volunteers were defensible. It is an improvement on the volunteer system, and it might have been made without the statute on which it is based, but that it will add an enormous expenditure to our army is not the case. Our Territorial army, in fact, cannot be kept in view as the first object which we have to consider in the course of these debates. . . . It is supposed to be the one certain result of the last General Election that there is a large majority in favour of maintaining our naval position; but we cannot maintain that naval position without straining every nerve to do it, and we shall not be able to put all our energy into maintaining that position if we talk about invasion, and tell the people of this country that the fleet cannot do its duty. . . . If you put the doctrine of invasion so high, and if you tell them that in any degree their safety depends upon the Territorial army trained and serving

here at home, then you run a great risk of compromising your naval defence and taking money out of one pocket and putting it into another, and of being weak at both points, and creating a Territorial army which could not face a great Continental force landed on our shores, and at the same time detracting from the power of your fleet. . . . The Territorial army, like the Volunteers, is really defended by most of us, in our hearts if not in our speech, as a reserve of the regular, expeditionary, offensive army for fighting across the seas. . . . My right hon. friend Mr. Haldane has always maintained the view that your army and army expenditure must depend upon policy. It is no good fighting him; he has both Houses of Parliament and both parties in his pocket. He is a man of legions political as well as military. The school represented by myself and the dominant school represented by him have differed, not upon the question of policy dictating your armaments, but upon the question of how your policy and your armaments together would work out."

Sir Charles Dilke's last utterance on defence was a review of Sir Cyprian Bridge's *Sea-Power, and Other Studies*, in July, 1910. It was a plea for reliance upon the navy to prevent invasion and upon a mobile military force for a counter-stroke. "I confess," Dilke ended, "that, as one interested in complete efficiency rather than especially in economy to the national purse, I join Sir Cyprian Bridge in asking to be shown, at least, the mobile, efficient, regular force ready for immediate service across the seas."

In the effort of a quarter of a century to have his country prepared for the struggle which was to come Dilke was associated with others, many of them conspicuous for knowledge and zeal; the services of Arnold-Forster, of John and Philip Colomb, and of Chesney, have been too little appreciated by their countrymen. Of their common endeavour Dilke was the chief exponent. At every stage of the movement his was its most characteristic and most comprehensive expression, marking the central line of thought. Some of the dominant ideas were his own. From him came the conception of defence as not merely national but imperial. He first pointed out the true function of the Prime Minister

in relation to it. The actual development proceeded along the lines which he drew—a strong navy; a general staff at the War Office; a regular army of first-rate quality, that could be sent abroad at short notice, most likely for the defence of Belgium against attacks from Germany; expansion to be sought, in the first instance, from the numbers furnished by the volunteer system. There were points which he failed to carry—the provision of arms and ammunition for the multitude of soldiers who would be forthcoming from the Empire, as well as of that modern artillery which must play so great a part in a future campaign; the search for generals capable of command in war; the enforcement of the responsibility of Ministers for preparations neglected. What was accomplished and what was left undone give the measure of Sir Charles Dilke as the statesman of Imperial Defence.

APPENDIX I

'"*December* 21*st*, 1893.

'"DEAR MR. BALFOUR,

'"I have been thinking over the matter which you mentioned in the tea-room yesterday. I am absolutely convinced of your own detachment from party in connection with it, and I write as one not likely at any time to act generally in connection with your party, unless in the (I hope most improbable) event of doubtful or unfortunate war.

'"The suggestion that I am inclined to make is that a letter should be written, to be signed by Sir George Chesney as a Conservative, by myself as a Gladstonian Liberal, by Arnold-Forster as a Liberal Unionist, and Spenser Wilkinson as a civilian expert, to Mr. Gladstone as Prime Minister, you and Chamberlain as leaders of your parties in the House of Commons, and Lord Salisbury and the Duke of Devonshire as leaders of the same parties in the House of Lords; that a copy should be sent by me confidentially to the Prince of Wales, it not being right, of course, that we should in any way address the Queen; that this letter should not be made public either at the

time or later; that this letter should press for the joint consideration of the naval and military problem, and should point to the creation of a Defence Ministry, of which the War Office and the Admiralty would be the branches, or to a more active control of the Secretary of State for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty by the Prime Minister personally. We should be put in our places by Mr. Gladstone, but I fancy, probably, not by the other four.

'"I had sooner discuss this matter first with you, if you think there is anything in it, than with Chamberlain, because he is, oddly enough, a much stronger party man than you are, and would be less inclined (on account of national objects which to him are predominant) to keep party out of his mind in connection with it. I have not, therefore, as yet mentioned the matter to him. If you think ill of the whole suggestion, and are not even disposed to suggest modification of it, it can be stopped at the present point.

'"The addition of Spenser Wilkinson to a member of each party is because I owe to him the clearing of my own mind, and believe that he is probably the best man on such questions who ever lived, except Clausewitz. When I first wrote upon them in *The Present Position of European Politics* in 1886-87, and in *The British Army* in 1887-88, I was in a fog—seeing the existing evils, but not clearly seeing the way out. In the Defence chapter of *Problems of Greater Britain* I began to see my way. Admiral Colomb, and Thursfield of *The Times*, who are really expositors of the application to our naval position of the general principles of military strategy of Clausewitz, helped me by their writings to find a road. I then set to work with Spenser Wilkinson, whose leaders in the *Manchester Guardian* (which he has now quitted, except as an amateur) struck me as being perfect, to think out the whole question; and we succeeded, by means of a little book we wrote together—*Imperial Defence*, published in February, 1892—in afterwards procuring the agreement of Lord Roberts in views widely different in many points from those which Lord Roberts had previously held. We are now in the position of being able to declare that in naval particulars there is no difference of opinion among the experts, and that in military there is so little upon points of importance that the experts are virtually agreed. This is a great point, never reached before last year, and it is owing to Spenser

Wilkinson, and in a less degree to Arnold-Forster, that it has been reached.

'"The question of the length at which the proposed letter should develop the existing dangers and the remedies is, of course, secondary.

'"The dangers are much greater than even the alarmist section of the public supposes. For example, the public have not in the least grasped the fact that we were on the brink of war with France at the moment of the Siam blockade, nor have they realized the great risk of the fall of the monarchy in Italy and of a complete change in Italian policy, leading more or less rapidly to an alliance with France and Russia. The adoption of Lefevre's policy by the Liberal party, which is possible at any time, and the announcement that we do not hope to hold the Mediterranean, might attach to the Franco-Russian combination even the present advisers of King Humbert.

'"With regard to Siam,* neither the English nor the French Government dare publish the despatches which passed about the blockade, and they have not been able to come to an agreement as to what portion of the papers should be published, although both Governments have long since promised publication. The words used in the House of Commons by Sir Edward Grey were altered by the French Government into meaningless words, and the words actually

* On December 25th, 1913, M. d'Estournelles de Constant wrote to the *Frankfürter Zeitung* an article warning Europe against the chance of war breaking out, not because it is desired, but "by chance, by mistake, by stupidity," and he cited an instance from his experiences in 1893:

"The stage was Siam, where British India and French Indo-China were seeking to push, one against the other, their rival spheres of influence. Lord Dufferin, British Ambassador in Paris and ex-Viceroy of India, was upholding the British claim, but it was in London that the negotiations were carried on. The irreparable conflict broke out on the day when the French Admiral, the bearer of an ultimatum, anchored his ships in the very river of Bangkok. I was negotiating, but during this time the British Government telegraphed to the Admiral commanding the Pacific station to proceed also to Bangkok with his whole fleet, which was far superior in numbers to ours.

"I knew nothing about it; no one knew anything about it. I was negotiating, and it was war almost to a certainty without anybody suspecting it. I only knew this later. Happily, wireless telegraphy did not then exist, and the orders of the Admiralty did not reach in time the British squadron, which was then sailing somewhere in the Pacific. Thanks to this chance delay, the negotiations had time to come to a successful conclusion, and the agreement was concluded."

used excluded by Governmental action from every newspaper in France."'

On the same day Dilke received the following reply:

"I shall be most pleased to have a further conversation with you on the all-important subject on which we had a brief talk yesterday, and which is dealt with in your letter of to-day.

"I should like, however, to discuss the matter first with Lord Salisbury (whom I shall see to-morrow), and, if you will allow me, to show him your letter.

"I may, however, say at once that I have *always* been in favour of a Defence Committee of Cabinet, with expert advisers and permanent records carrying on the work from Government to Government; and that, oddly enough, I pressed the idea on Asquith last week. I think he and Rosebery would be in favour of the plan; not so the older members of the Cabinet."

'On Friday, January 5th, 1894, I had a long interview with Balfour upon my letter, and wrote on it to Wilkinson as follows:

'"*Confidential.*

'"76, SLOANE STREET, S.W.,
'"*January 5th*, 1894.

'"DEAR WILKINSON,

'"I saw Balfour (in a full discussion) this afternoon. We provisionally agreed, with Lord Salisbury's consent, that Sir George Chesney, Arnold-Forster (if he agrees), you, and I, should sign a letter which we should address (with the view to publishing it with the replies) to Mr. Gladstone as Prime Minister and leader of my party, to Lord Salisbury and to Balfour as leaders of Sir George Chesney's party, and to the Duke of Devonshire and Chamberlain as leaders of Arnold-Forster's party, and of which I should privately send a copy to the Prince of Wales in the hope of its reaching the Queen. In this letter we should press for the joint consideration of the naval and military problem, and point either to the creation of a Defence Ministry, of which the War Office and Admiralty would be the branches—to which the objection is that Parliamentary consent would be necessary—or to a more active control over the Secretary of State for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty, and their Estimates, by the Prime Minister personally, or to that which is Balfour's

own scheme and which has the support, among our people, of Rosebery and Asquith: the creation of a Defence Committee of the Cabinet, ordinarily to consist of the Prime Minister, of the leader of the other House, of the Secretary of State for War, the First Lord, and (doubtless) the Chancellor of the Exchequer (?), with expert advisers and permanent records which would carry on their work from Government to Government. Mr. Gladstone would snub us. The other four would not, and our proposal (that is, our third proposal, which is Balfour's) would probably be adopted when the Conservatives came in, and continued by the Liberals.

'"Balfour would be very willing to express his favourable opinion of our view in debate in the House of Commons, should we raise one next Session, and Lord Salisbury is less inclined to make a strong and distinctly favourable reply to our letter than is Balfour.

'"Balfour would go more willingly, if possible, than he does into the schemes if he could see his way beforehand to the saving of money on the army for the purpose of devoting it to the navy. He says that he himself cannot put his finger on the waste which he knows must exist, that Buller has to some extent his confidence and tells him that there is none, although Balfour is not convinced by this. We discussed our Indian army scheme, to which he sees no objection, and (very fully) the Duke of Cambridge and the extent to which he will be supported by the Queen.

'"Balfour sees immense difficulty in the absence of a sufficiently commanding expert, and in the consequent jealousy between the Admiralty and War Office officials.

'"Will the letter which Sir George Chesney has do as a base, or would it be better to write a shorter and a fresh letter? If the latter, will you try your hand at it, if you approve? And after noting this will you return it to me, that I may send it to Sir George Chesney and then to Arnold-Forster?

'"Balfour had in reading *us** asked questions through George Hamilton, who agrees with us, on the point of further employment of marines, and has been told that they would be sadly costly.

'"Yours very truly,

'"CHARLES W. DILKE."'

* "Us" refers to the joint work on Imperial Defence. One of the recommendations was to substitute marines for soldiers in the small garrisons, such as Bermuda.

APPENDIX II

In reply to the joint letter, Chamberlain wrote to Dilke:

"I have received the interesting paper on the subject of National Defence which you have communicated to me on behalf of yourself and the other signatories. One of the greatest difficulties which any politician must feel in dealing with this question has been the apparent difference of opinion among those best qualified to speak authoritatively on the subject, and it is an important advance to find practical proposals agreed to by some of those who have given special study to the problems involved. Without venturing at the present state of the inquiry to commit myself to any specific proposal, I may say that I am favourably inclined to the main lines laid down in your paper—namely, the closer union between the two great departments of national defence, and the recognition of the responsibility of the professional advisers of the Cabinet on all questions of military and naval provision and administration."

Mr. Balfour wrote:

"I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of February 12th, dealing with certain very important points connected with the problem of National Defence. Though it would be inopportune for me to pass any detailed judgment upon the scheme which you have laid before me in outline, and though it is evident that difficulties of a serious kind must attend any effort to carry out so important a change in our traditional methods of dealing with the Admiralty and the War Office, I may yet be permitted to express my own conviction that the evils that you indicate are real evils, and that the imperfections in our existing system, on which you insist, might under certain not impossible contingencies seriously imperil our most important national interests.

"That four gentlemen of different training, belonging to different parties in the State, approaching this subject from different points of view, and having little, perhaps, in common except a very intimate knowledge of the questions connected with National Defence, should be in entire agreement as to the general lines along which future reforma-

tion should proceed, is a fact of which the public will doubtless take note, and which is not likely to be ignored by those responsible for the preservation of the Empire."

'Our letter was in all the papers about February 28th (1894), with replies from Balfour and Chamberlain. Mr. Gladstone's reply, written just before he resigned, was in his own hand, and more than usually legible. Though it was not marked "Private," I did not print it, as it seemed too personal and playful. It meant that he had resigned, but I did not know this till an hour after I had received it:

'"You will forgive my pleading eyesight, which demanded the help of others and thereby retarded operations, as an excuse for my having failed to acknowledge the paper on Naval Defence which you were so good as to send me. You will, I fear, find me a less interesting correspondent than some who have replied at length, for I fear I ought to confine myself to assuring you that I have taken care it should come to the notice of my colleagues."

'On March 9th I sat near to Asquith at a dinner, and he told me that his Defence Committee of the Cabinet, favoured by Balfour and Rosebery, would soon be "a fact." The decision was made known in a debate which I raised on the 16th.'

A note adds: 'When the Tories came in in June, 1895, they adopted the scheme of a Minister (the Duke of Devonshire) over both army and navy, which had been put forward in the Dilke – Chesney – Arnold-Forster–Wilkinson correspondence with Balfour and Chamberlain, and originally invented by me. On the night of the Government (Liberal) defeat Campbell-Bannerman had promised a Commander-in-Chief who should be the Chief Military Adviser, a double triumph for my view.'

CHAPTER LVII

DEATH OF LADY DILKE—PARLIAMENT OF 1905

In 1903, Chamberlain, by raising the question of Tariff Reform and putting himself at the head of a movement for revising the Free Trade policy which had been accepted by both the great political parties since 1846, practically broke up the Conservative Government. It survived, indeed, under the leadership of Mr. Balfour; but it was only a feeble shadow of the powerful Administration which Lord Salisbury had formed in 1895.

On the motion for adjournment before the Whitsuntide recess (May 28th, 1903), Sir Charles raised the whole question of commercial policy, directing himself chiefly to the speeches that had been made by Mr. Balfour and by Mr. Bonar Law. But it was Mr. Chamberlain's policy that was in question. Years later, after the whole subject has been incessantly discussed, it is difficult to realize the effect produced by the sudden and unexpected onset of that redoubtable champion. Free Trade had been so long taken for granted that the case for it had become unfamiliar; what remained was an academic conviction, and against that Chamberlain arrayed an extraordinary personal prestige backed by a boldness of assertion to which his position as a business man lent authority. To meet an onset so sudden and so ably conducted was no easy task, and for Dilke there was the unhappy personal element of a first angry confrontation with his old ally. Mr. Chamberlain described Sir Charles's motion as gratuitous and harassing, "an affair of spies," for a day had been fixed for the regular encounter. Yet what was needed then was to show on the Liberal side that confidence which antici-

pates the combat. The temper of the time is well indicated by a letter from an old friend, the Bishop of Hereford:

"I hope you will stick to the business, and protect ordinary people from the new sophistry both by speech and writing. So few people have any intellectual grip that everything may depend on the leadership of a few men like yourself, who can speak with knowledge and authority, and will take the trouble to put concrete facts before the public."

Meanwhile Tariff Reform had begun to act as a disintegrant on the Unionist party, and by the end of October, 1903, Lord James was writing to Sir Charles Dilke as to the position of Unionist Free Traders: "Can nothing be done for these unfortunate men?" There is no evidence that their state moved Sir Charles to compassion, but it is clear that he feared lest a regrouping of parties should destroy the commanding position which Radicals had gained, and as soon as Parliament reassembled he took action.

'*Thursday, February* 11*th*, 1904.—I sought an interview with John Redmond, to whom I said that there seemed a rapidly increasing risk of the speedy formation of a Whig Administration dominated by Devonshire influence, and that it might be wise that he, with or without Blake, should meet myself and Lloyd George for the Radicals, J. R. Macdonald for the Labour Representation Committee, and with him either Snowden or Keir Hardie. Redmond assented, and I then saw Lloyd George. Lloyd George was at first inclined to assent, but on second thoughts asked for time, which I think meant to see Dr. Clifford.

'*Friday, February* 12*th*, 1904.—Lloyd George had not made up his mind either way, but thought that it would be wise to meet except for the fact that trouble might happen afterwards as to what had passed. I pointed out that this could be easily guarded against by his writing me a letter making any conditions or reservations which he thought necessary, which I should show to Redmond, and write to him that I had so shown. On this he promised to let me know on Monday what he thought, and probably would prepare a draft letter.

'*February* 18*th*, 1904.—Further talk with George. A little afraid of being attacked by Perks for selling the pass

on education. I said that I must go on alone to a certain extent, and he then consented to come in, and on my suggesting reservations—as, for example, on education—he said: "No, I can trust the Irish as regards the personal matter, and, as I come in, I will come in freely without any reservations." '

Through the general unsettlement which Chamberlain's new policy had created, a dissolution and a change of Government were now possibilities of a not distant future, and speculations were rife as to the future position of Sir Charles. Lady Dilke, who regarded the admission of her husband to office as a proof of his public exoneration from the charges brought against his character, was ardently desirous that he should accept without reserve any offer of a place in the Cabinet, and it was much against her wish that Sir Charles imposed conditions, in conversation with a political friend who had been a member of the last Liberal Cabinet. So far as anxiety again to hold office existed on his part, it was more because of her wishes in the matter than from any strong political ambition of his own.*

But the motive which in this, as in all else, swayed him so strongly was now to be taken away.

Lady Dilke's wish for her husband's return to office was shared by many Radical politicians, and in the course of the summer Captain Cecil Norton, one of the Liberal Whips, in a speech expressed his opinion of the value of Sir Charles Dilke's services, and his anticipation that the fall of the Tory Government would bring back the Radical leader of 1885 to his full share of power. This utterance was enough to set the old machinery in motion against him. A series of meetings had been organized by the advanced Radical section of the House of Commons, and the first was to have been held in Newington, Captain Norton's constituency,

* He wrote to Mr. Deakin from Geneva, December 9th, 1904: "Only one word of what you say on 'too tardy rewards in higher responsibilities'! I was in the inner ring of the Cabinet before I was either a Cabinet Minister or a Privy Councillor, 1880-1882, and I am not likely to have the offer of the place the work of which would tempt me. The W.O. would kill me, but I could not refuse it. I have been told on 'authority' that it will not come to me."

with Sir Charles for the chief speaker. Threats of a hostile demonstration reached the Newington committee, and it was decided—though Sir Charles Dilke was opposed to any change—that the series should be opened with a speech from him in his old constituency, the place where he was best known and where he had most friends. It was fixed for October 20th, 1904.

Nothing of the reason for this change was told to Lady Dilke. Her health had given some cause for anxiety, though at Dockett Eddy in August and at Speech House in September she had been more bright, more gay, than ever. She herself wrote to friends that she had "never been so happy in her life," but felt need of rest, and was going to Pyrford for a long rest.

She reached Pyrford with her husband on October 15th, and he wished her to see a doctor, but she refused. "He would stop my going up with you on Thursday, and I want to go. I think I ought to be there."

It was long since Dilke had stood before those whom he once represented, and she was determined to be with him; she assisted at the triumphant success of this meeting; but the strain of coming up to London and the excitement justified her forecast of the doctor's opinion. That night she was taken ill, yet till the morning would make no sign, for fear of disturbing her husband. She admitted then that she was very ill; to Pyrford, however, she was set on returning; in London she "could not rest." By Sunday she seemed to be on the highroad to recovery, but on that Sunday night the end came.

Those last days and hours have been fully described by Sir Charles in the memoir prefixed to her posthumous book. All that he has written in his own Memoir is this: 'October 23rd, 1904: Emilia died in my arms after one of our happiest Sunday afternoons.'

So ended the marriage which, contracted under gloomy auspices in 1885, had resulted in nineteen years of unbroken felicity. Her praise has been written in love and reverence by her husband, who was her equal comrade. The union

between them was so complete as to exclude the thought of gratitude, but whatever man can owe to a woman Sir Charles Dilke owed to his wife; and though she died without achieving that end on which she had set her heart, of utterly and explicitly cancelling by public assent all the charges that had been brought against him, yet she had so lived and so helped him to live that he was heedless of this matter, except for her sake.

Over her grave many hands were stretched out to him. Chamberlain wrote from Italy:

"MY DEAR DILKE,

"I have just seen with the deepest sympathy and sorrow the news of the terrible loss you have sustained.

"Consolation would be idle in presence of such a blow, but I should like you to feel that as an old friend, separated by the unhappy political differences of these later years, I still share your personal grief in losing a companion so devoted to you, and so well qualified to aid and strengthen you in all the work and anxiety of your active life.

"When the first great shock is past, I earnestly trust that you may find in the continued performance of your public duties some alleviation of your private sorrow, and I assure you most earnestly of my sympathy in this time of trial.

"Believe me,

"Yours very truly,

"J. CHAMBERLAIN."

Mr. Morley wrote also:

"MY DEAR DILKE,

"I did not hear the news of the unhappy stroke that has befallen you until it was a fortnight old. You need not to be told what a shock it was. I think that I had known her longer than anybody—from the time of a college ball at Oxford in 1859; a radiant creature she then was. To me her friendship was unwavering, down to the last time I saw her, when she gave me a long and *intime* talk about the things that, as you know, she had most at heart. I am deeply and sincerely sorry and full of sympathy with you. Words count little in such a disaster, but this I hope you will believe.

"Ever yours,

"JOHN MORLEY."

Emilia F. S. Dilke

LADY DILKE IN THE YEAR 1903.

From a photograph by Thomson.

To face p. 462, Vol. II.

When after his wife's death Sir Charles again took up his life in London, those who saw him off his guard recognized keenly the effect of this last sudden blow, heavier because unexpected. The very mainspring of his life had been weakened. But he exerted himself to prepare Lady Dilke's unpublished writings, and to write the memoir which prefaced them. Of this he says:

'I put my whole soul into the work of bringing out her posthumous book with a proper memoir, and it nearly killed me. I was never so pleased with anything as with the success of the book. To hundreds of the best people it seems to have meant and said all that I wished it to say and mean.'

Probably, also, to many readers it gave for the first time a true image, not of her only for whose sake it was written, but of him who wrote. One letter of this moment deserves to be put on record. Mr. Arnold-Forster wrote:

"Dear Sir Charles,

"In a very few days the Session, with all its conflicts, its misunderstandings, and its boredom, will be upon us. Before it comes let me take advantage of one of the few remaining days of calm to write a line to you.

"It is inevitable, and no doubt right, that you and I should find ourselves on different sides; we shall probably differ on a good many points, and on some we shall very likely express our differences. But I trust that nothing in the rough and tumble of public work will interrupt the pleasant relations which have so long existed between yourself and me, and the existence of which I have so greatly valued.

"You have been a good and kind friend to me ever since I entered the House, and I have always valued both your friendship and your good opinion, when you could give it me. I have known well enough that I owed much to Lady Dilke's friendship and affection for my wife; but I shall never forget how generously that friendship was extended to me. I was very deeply sensible of the privilege of receiving the confidence and the good-will of a very noble and wonderfully able woman.

"But I must not weary you with too long a letter. All I want to tell you is that I cherish the hope that even now

that this bond of union, this comprehending and reconciling presence, is no longer here to keep our tempers wise and sweet, you may still count me among your warm friends, and—despite the estrangement of party politics—may continue to give me your good-will and may believe in the continuance of mine."

1905. The Administration of Mr. Balfour fell in the last days of November. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was entrusted with the formation of a Liberal Government, and the question was at once eagerly asked, in political circles, whether Sir Charles Dilke would be a member of it. In February, 1905, he had written to Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice expressing a hope that he would be outside the next Government, so as to be free to oppose the deal with Russia which in his opinion Sir E. Grey was contemplating.

The feeling of the Conservative party on the question of his return to official life is sufficiently shown by the fact that he had previously been sounded as to his willingness to accept the chairmanship of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law. That the attitude of the Court towards him had changed is also clear. Not only was his attendance at Levees approved, but he and Lady Dilke had received the royal command to the Queen's Garden Party at Windsor. The attitude of his own party was, however, the determining factor.

Before the critical time actually arrived, there had been tentative conversations, and, although Sir Charles did not expect that any invitation would come to him, Mr. Labouchere thought otherwise, and a letter from him describes conversations which he had held with Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman: "I thought then from his general observations that you would be War Minister."

In Labouchere's opinion the determining factor was a public correspondence in which Dr. Talbot, then Bishop of Southwark, took the lead in protesting against any such appointment. But this was probably a mistaken view. There is no reason to believe that the Liberal leader had any wish to include Sir Charles in his Ministry. The Cor-

dite vote was not forgotten by the members of the Liberal Administration of 1892-1895. No office was offered to Sir Charles. His answer to the letter written by Labouchere on January 6th was:

"I never thought C.-B. could possibly offer me the War Office, and I could not have refused it or made conditions for the post, and it would have killed me. I did not expect him to offer me any place. Had my wife lived, that would have hurt her, and, through her, me. As it is, I prefer to be outside—a thing which, though often true, no one ever believes of others.

"But when in office—April, 1880, to June, 1885—I was exceptionally powerful, and nearly always got my own way in my department. That could never have been repeated—a strong reason why I have all along preferred the pleasant front seat in the house to a less commanding position on the stage."

When Mr. Haldane's name was announced for the War Office, Mr. Arnold-Forster sent a message agreeing with Sir Charles's high estimate of the new War Minister's abilities. "By far the best appointment they could possibly make—with the one exception." And Mr. T. R. Buchanan, Financial Secretary to the War Office, wrote in reply to Sir Charles's congratulations:

"I have taken the liberty of showing your letter to Haldane, and he desires me to thank you for what you say about him, and he values it all the more highly because of your generosity. You would certainly have been the natural man to be now in his place, and it is a public loss that you are not in it."

At the election which followed Sir Charles was re-elected by an enormous majority for his old constituency, after issuing this, the shortest of all his habitually short addresses:

"GENTLEMEN,—I solicit with confidence the renewal of your trust.

"Believe me, your devoted servant,
"CHARLES W. DILKE."

In the autumn of 1905 he had delivered a series of addresses, mainly to audiences of Labour men, advocating

a general co-operation of Radicals with the Irish and Labour groups. For Ireland he urged a return to the "Parnell-Chamberlain scheme of 1885," but applied as a part of Home Rule all round. His proposal was that the Irish members should in the autumn sit in Dublin, the Scottish members in Edinburgh, the Welsh in Wales, and the English at Westminster, and should then transact local affairs, their decisions being ratified or rejected by the United House when it met in spring as an Imperial Parliament.

In December, 1905, he wrote to Mr. Deakin:

"The composition of the new Ministry seems to me, as to everybody else, good. The Imperial question will slumber, I think, until the Irish question has become again acute. The Ministry ought to be able to do very well in 1906; two Sessions up to Christmas. In 1907 I expect a row with Redmond, in which I shall be more or less on Redmond's side. The Liberal party will not face the fact that they cannot avoid dealing with the Irish question without the certainty of the Irish moderates, of whom Redmond is the most moderate, being forced to say: 'We can no longer keep Ireland quiet for you.' The Liberal party will not have coercion, and, that being so, they have no alternative except to do what they ought to do. It would be wiser to do it before they are compelled; and if they did it before compulsion was applied, they would have more chance of carrying the country with them."

In a lighter vein he wrote to Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, commenting on the extraordinary predominance of Scottish members in the Cabinet, on December 15th, 1905:

"I had already, before I received your criticism on the Scotch, suggested to Hudson (who is with me) the things that Labouchere is likely to say about his friends, and had yesterday got as far as his turning round and asking us in a loud whisper: 'Who is it who represents *England* in this Government ?'*

* The Cabinet consisted of nineteen persons. Of these, the Prime Minister (Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman); the Chancellor (Lord Loreburn); the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith); the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Lord Elgin); the Secretary of State for India (Lord Morley); the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane);

"We used to think that the value of Randolph was that he gave to politics the constant pleasure of the unexpected. Rosebery now does this in the Lords, and Charles II.'s truthful saying about the House of Commons, 'It is as good as a play,' becomes on account of Rosebery temporarily true of the House of Lords. We shall all of us be drawn there very often, and even such a House of Commons man as your humble servant, grumbling the while, will nevertheless find himself attracted to that 'throne.'"

When the new Parliament met in 1906, Labour had for the first time a really important representation.*

Sir Charles noted in his Diary: 'The Labour party was my original scheme for the I.L.P. as developed in talks at Pyrford, before its formation, with Champion and with Ben Tillett. To join it or lead it was never my thought.'

His purpose was rather to be a connecting link between the varying groups in the development of a legislative programme which he forecast with shrewd prevision. On January 6th, 1906, he wrote to Labouchere:

"As I now seem to have the confidence of Balfour, Redmond, and Keir Hardie, the position will be difficult; but in the present year Redmond and Keir Hardie will, I think, join with me in supporting Government. Next year it will be different, unless, as I expect, Grey goes for H.R. The small Budget of 1906 will be a disappointment, and so, I fear, will be the big one of 1907.

"The really weak point is that the Government is damned unless it fights the Lords in 1907, and that the promise of 'five years in power' will prevent the hacks from fighting."

Holding these views, it was natural that he should seek

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the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord Tweedmouth); the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Bryce); the Secretary of State for Scotland (Mr. Sinclair)—nine in all—were Scottish Peers or represented Scottish constituencies. It was also observed that Sir Edward Grey's constituency was the Scottish Borderland; and it was jestingly said that John Burns was put into the Cabinet because he had persuaded the Premier that he descended from the poet!

Mr. Birrell, when the Government was formed, was not in Parliament, but his last constituency had been Scotch. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was Lord Aberdeen.

* See Chapter LII., "Labour," p. 346.

to maintain that organization of a Radical group which had existed continuously since Fawcett established, or rather revived, it on first entering the Parliament of 1865-1868. The Radical Club, of which Sir Charles himself was the first secretary, grew out of this, and was largely directed by him till 1880, when he ceased, on taking office, to be a member.* His brother succeeded him in the secretaryship; but with Ashton Dilke's death the club died also, being replaced by a loose committee organization which lasted till 1893, and then came to an untimely end because the party Whips attempted to pack the meeting which elected this committee. The elected body was then replaced by a virtually self-chosen group. In 1904 an emergency committee of this group was appointed; and when the new Parliament met, Sir Charles was the only member of the committee left. Mr. Harcourt and Captain Norton had taken office, Mr. Stanhope had gone to the Lords, Mr. Labouchere had retired. It therefore fell to Sir Charles to reassemble surviving atoms of this organism, to attract new ones, and to make known its nature and purpose.

It had always been essential, in his view, that there should be no "party," no chairman, and no whips; but simply a grouping for the purpose of stimulating the Government by pressure as to practical and immediate Parliamentary objects on which advanced men think alike or harmoniously, and for current arrangements, such as balloting for motions and generally making the best use of private members' time.

There was at the outset a great influx of members, and three secretaries were appointed. At all meetings at which he was present Sir Charles took the chair, and through this centre exercised much influence, committing the House of Commons to a series of resolutions—abstract indeed, but none the less important.

The various objects which Radicalism should have before it in 1906 are sketched in a kind of shorthand summary:

* For earlier mention of the Radical Club, see Vol. I., Chapter VIII., p. 100.

"Good understanding with Irish Nationalist members, based on at least the Parnell-Chamberlain National Council scheme of 1885, and with the Labour party for common objects.

"So far as further political reforms are needed no registration reform worth having, but principle of adult suffrage of all grown men and women carries simplification and single vote.

"Payment of members and expenses.

"Single Chamber, or restriction of power of House of Lords (*i.e.*, no 'Reform' of = stronger).*

"Fiscal reform, capable of being dealt with by Budget or administratively, and money to be saved by . . . increased revenue provided by increased graduation of death duties and by relieving the Imperial Exchequer of the local grants, substituting taxation of land values by the local authorities for the latter.

"This last point is closely connected with full power to local authorities to acquire land for all purposes, and this with municipal trading and other forms of municipal Socialism. The heads of the Labour policy are now so universally embraced as not to be specially Radical; Taff Vale, for example, being supported by all Liberals and some Tories, and the Miners' Eight Hours receiving the support of nearly all Liberals and of some Tories."

On the question of electoral reform, and specially of woman's suffrage, all his action was guided by one conclusion thus expressed, and embodied in the Franchise Bill introduced by him each Session:

"The limited franchise, if it is ever carried, will be carried as a party Conservative measure intended to aid Conservative opinions and to rest the franchise upon an unassailable limited base, and it will be carried in that case against the counter-proposal of the suffrage of all grown men and women, made by those representing the advanced thought of the country."†

It is unnecessary to emphasize the completeness with which political evolution has followed the lines here marked

* Sir Charles always maintained that "Reform" of the House of Lords would result in strengthening its position.

† Memorandum by Sir Charles Dilke on "Suffrage of All Grown Men and Women," issued by the People's Suffrage Federation.

out by him. Others reaped the harvest. But no man then living had done more to sow the seed.

The Parliament in which he found himself was one of singular interest. He wrote:

"The old form of party divisions is, in the great majority of constituencies, not yet much affected by recent events. In the House of Commons it is almost dead for the present year. . . .

"The future cannot be foreseen, and in politics it is always foolish to attempt to prophesy. I have frequently myself made or quoted the remark that in politics a year is equivalent to eternity. I have now limited myself to 1906. Whether the party system, in which British statesmen of our time and of past generations have been nurtured, will ever be restored is another matter. Whether the birth of a definite Labour party, in addition to a definite Irish Nationalist party, will be followed by any further division, or whether, as I expect, it will not, yet the division into four parties—of which three will compete actively for the favour of the British electorate—will, I think, continue, and we follow here the line of political development in which first the Australian Colonies, and now the Commonwealth, have led the way."*

Writing in the *Financial Review of Reviews* for April, 1906, he spoke of the "extraordinarily interesting nature of the debates," of which example had already been given, and he foreshadowed no less interesting action. The changes which he had in view, mainly financial, were "not likely to be popular in the City, with solicitors, with the organized representatives of the employing class," but none the less they would probably be carried into law. The old assumption that democratic movements would be carried into legislation "by capitalist members steeped in Radical pledges" had ceased to correspond with the facts. A new type of member of Parliament had appeared, and Sir Charles welcomed the change.

"It is possible that the members are more Radical than the constituencies. This is an arguable question; but that they are convinced upon such questions, not by pressure,

* *Potentia*, 1906.

but by training and by thought, is a conclusion which no one who knows the present House of Commons can resist.

"There has probably never sat so interesting a House of Commons in the history of this country. With a good deal of experience of Parliaments and of their inner life and thought, and with the opportunity of frequent discussion with those who, like Mr. Gladstone, remembered all the Parliaments back to the early thirties, and those, like Mr. Vernon Harcourt,* who remembered much earlier Parliaments, I am certain that there has never met at Westminster an assembly so able and at the same time so widely different in intellectual composition from its predecessors as that which is now there gathered. The development of opinion, however, is less of a surprise to those who have watched Australia and New Zealand than to those who have confined their studies to the United Kingdom and the Continent."†

Payment of members he did not live to see, but he always regarded it as "an extraordinary anomaly that payment should have been discontinued in this country."

"Members are paid in every other country in the world, and in every British colony (I believe without exception). Non-payment means deliberate preference for moneyed oligarchy, as only rare exceptions can produce a democratic member under such a system. It excludes all poor men of genius unless they can get themselves paid by parties like the Irish, which makes them slaves. It throws undue power into the hands of the capital as the seat of the legislature, and it leads to poor members selling their souls to rotten compromises."

Despite the advance of age and a growing weakness of the heart, the impression which he produced was always one of commanding vigour. His habit of fencing kept him alert and supple in all his movements. Notwithstanding his

* George Granville Vernon Harcourt, elected to the House of Commons as member for Oxford in 1831. He held his seat till 1859.

† In 1911, when Lord Hugh Cecil described with violent rhetoric the alleged degradation of the House of Commons, Mr. Balfour was moved to protest, and cited in support of his own view "a man whose authority had always been admitted." "I remember," he said, "talking over with Sir Charles Dilke the question of general Parliamentary practice, and he said, and I agree, that there has been no deterioration either in his or in my Parliamentary experience."

elaborate preparation for the work, no man's appearances in debate were less premeditated; he spoke when he felt inclined: had he spoken for effect, his interpositions would have been much less frequent. But when tactics required it, no man was more willing to efface himself. Especially was this so in all his relations with Labour; when he could leave to the Labour party the credit of moving an important amendment, he gladly left it to them. Yet when he was more likely than they to secure Liberal support, he was prepared to move against the Government, and in one notable amendment on the Trade Disputes Bill brought down their vast majority to the bare figure of five.*

The work which in these last years cost him most labour—in view of his failing health, it would have been well for his friends had he never undertaken it—was that given to the Committee on the Income Tax, of which he became chairman in 1906. Sir Bernard Mallet (now Registrar-General) writes in 1916:

"In the spring of 1906 the Government decided to appoint a strong Committee to inquire into the questions of graduation and differentiation of the income tax, which had for some Sessions been coming into prominence in consequence of the financial difficulties caused by the South African War. Mr. Asquith, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, offered the chairmanship to Sir Charles Dilke, who had never claimed to be an expert in finance, and only accepted it after strong pressure, and the Select Committee set to work accordingly early in May. Having taken up the work, which occupied most of the summer, Sir Charles threw himself into it with immense energy. He familiarized himself with all the literature bearing on the question, and he made a point of calling, as witnesses, not only the usual officials, but also as many outside economists and statisticians as might be able to throw light upon questions which, as he rightly conceived, lay at the root of any proper consideration of the problem before the Committee. He attached special importance to all the evidence bearing upon foreign and colonial methods and principles in the

* For a fuller account of Sir Charles's work connected with the Taff Vale Decision and the Trade Disputes Act, see "Labour," Chapter LII., pp. 345 and 365.

taxation of income and property, and to the endeavour he made to get at statistics bearing on the distribution of income—two vitally important factors introduced by him, for the first time, into any official handling of the subject.

"But the result of all the knowledge, thoroughness, and enthusiasm, which, as his friends could testify, he lavished without stint (and, it is to be feared, to the serious detriment of his health) upon the work, must have somewhat disappointed him. Sir Charles's attempts to deal with the matter in a comprehensive spirit and produce a report which would rival in interest the famous reports of two previous Select Committees on the subject, those of 1851 and 1861, were hampered by the necessity, under which the Committee lay, of devising a means to increase the yield of the income tax with the least political friction. The two expedients which came most prominently before the Committee were those of differentiating the rate of the income tax in favour of earned or precarious incomes, and of imposing a supertax upon the larger incomes. Both of these were included in the recommendations of the report which was ultimately adopted,* and carried into effect in the Budgets of 1907 and 1909 respectively.† Sir Charles's own view was opposed to both these methods. He would have preferred to differentiation, even in the limited form (up to £2,000 a year) in which it became law, the method of separate taxation of property, or income from property, as in Prussia and Holland, if death duties were not considered as sufficient taxation upon property.

"He was certainly impressed by the unscientific character of the proposed differentiation; by the difficulty of distinguishing between 'earned' and 'unearned' incomes, and by the possibilities of abuse which this method of dealing with the question offered. Supertax he would have reserved for a national emergency, but it should not be supposed that his opposition to it implied opposition to graduation either in principle or in practice. He was, indeed, strongly in favour of a graduated income tax, but, in his judgment, a supertax was a somewhat clumsy way of effecting the purpose aimed at. In his opinion the universal declaration of all taxable incomes was an indispensable

* Report of the Select Committee on Income Tax, H. of C. 365 of 1906.

† See *British Budgets*, by Bernard Mallet (1913), pp. 262, 263, 274, 277-281, and 305, where also some comments on the recommendations of the Committee are to be found.

preliminary to the full and just graduation of the income tax, and written notes of his are in existence showing how much importance he attached to this point.

"Holding these views, he could not produce a report sufficiently decisive in its acceptance of the methods favoured by the majority of his colleagues.

"The stupendous increases which have taken place in the rates of the income tax owing to the present war, increases far surpassing anything contemplated by the Committee over which Sir Charles presided ten years ago, have thrown all such controversies as these into the shade; but apart from the practical results of its recommendations, which for good or ill left at the time a very decided mark on fiscal legislation, this investigation succeeded, owing mainly to his influence, in eliciting a quantity of evidence which will always make it of historical interest to students of taxation."

CHAPTER LVIII

FOREIGN AFFAIRS: 1890 TO 1910

Even before his return, in July, 1892, to Parliament, Sir Charles Dilke was still a powerful critic of the country's foreign policy. It is a curious commentary on the wisdom of those who believe that, except at moments of special excitement or of public danger, it is impossible to interest the electorate in foreign affairs, that during this period he was constantly able to gather large public audiences in the North of England and in Wales, and induce them to listen to careful criticisms on questions such as the delimitation of the African continent, the Newfoundland fisheries, British policy in the Pacific, and the future of the Congo State. This was achieved, although no party appeal could be made or was attempted, and although there was a deliberate effort by an influential section of the London Press to boycott the speaker. In these speeches Sir Charles pointed out that a perhaps too general acquiescence existed on the part of most Liberals in the foreign policy of the Government, merely because Lord Salisbury had made no attempt to continue or to revive the pro-Turkish and warlike policy which had distinguished the Government of Lord Beaconsfield in 1878. Lord Salisbury was now mainly intent on settling outstanding questions with France and Germany, especially in Africa, dealing with them one by one. The ordinary Conservative partisan still said in public that nothing could be worse than the foreign policy and practice of the Liberal party; but he was also saying in private that the policy of his own party was little better, that the army both at home and in India was neglected, and that the fleet was probably insufficient. Dread, however,

of Mr. Gladstone and of the possible return of the Liberal party to power, made him with rare exceptions silent in Parliament; while, on the other hand, the mass of the Liberal party had become supporters of Lord Salisbury's foreign and colonial policy. "The fact that Lord Salisbury had not been an active Turk or an active Jingo had proved enough to cover everything."* But the absence of any well-sustained criticism in Parliament had evident disadvantages, and Sir Charles's speeches at this time supplied the deficiency.

The political fortunes of France between 1887 and 1895 were at a low ebb. The financial scandals which led to the resignation of President Grévy in 1887, the serio-comic political career of General Boulanger, dangerous and constant labour disturbances in the great centres of industry, the Panama financial scandals of 1893, the assassination of President Carnot in 1894, and the impossibility of forming stable Ministries, caused a general lack of confidence in the future of the Republic both at home and abroad, which the facile glories of the Paris Exhibition of 1889 could not conceal. The foreign policy of the country seemed to consist in a system of "pin-pricks" directed against Great Britain, and in hostility to Italy, which culminated in anti-Italian riots in the South of France, a tariff war, and the entry of Italy into the alliance of the Central Powers. The letters of Sir Charles during this period are full of expressions of despair at the condition of French politics and at the general lack of statesmanship. The suspicion which he entertained of Russian intentions caused him also to look askance at the newly formed friendship of France with Russia, which, commencing with the visit of a French naval squadron under Admiral Gervais to Cronstadt in August, 1891, was finally sealed by a treaty of alliance signed in March, 1895, though the precise terms were not known.†

* "The Conservative Foreign Policy," *Fortnightly Review*, January, 1892, by Sir Charles Dilke.

† In a letter to M. Joseph Reinach written after the appearance of *The Present Position of European Politics*, Sir Charles says: "I did

In Germany the position was different. The Dual Alliance devised by Prince Bismarck between Germany and Austria-Hungary had become the Triple Alliance by the accession of Italy, and had been further strengthened by an assurance of naval support given to Italy by Lord Salisbury in the event of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean being disturbed. The presumable disturber aimed at was evidently France.* The meddlesome intrigues of Russian partisans, and a long series of political outrages culminating in the murder of M. Stambulof, were gradually forming an Austro-German party in Bulgaria; while the wise and progressive administration of Bosnia and the Herzegovina by Herr von Kallay had encouraged a belief that some good thing might even yet come out of Austria, notwithstanding the famous expression of a belief to the contrary by Mr. Gladstone.

In the circumstances Lord Salisbury determined to base his policy on a good understanding with Germany, and he had his reward. The African settlement of 1890 was a comprehensive scheme which undoubtedly made great concessions to German wishes, but, taken in connection with

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not say 'Gambetta had been a great friend to the Poles.' I said he hated the Russians. He told me so over and over again. He held the same view as Napoleon I. as to Russia, and said, 'J'irais chercher mes alliances n'importe où—même à Berlin,' and, 'La Russie me tire le pan de l'habit, mais jamais je n'écouterais ce qu'on me fait dire.' But, in searching for my own reasons for this in the first article, I said that as a law student he had been brought up with a generation which had had Polish sympathies, and that perhaps this had caused (unconsciously, I meant) his anti-Russian views. I know he did not believe in setting up a Poland."

* "In 1903 Lord Lansdowne explained that in February, 1887, there had been that exchange of notes between Italy and ourselves of which I had written in that year. In *The Present Position of European Politics* I made allusion to Disraeli's proposal, before his defeat in 1880, of a league of the Powers for the defence of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean. The notes of February, 1887, nominally dealt only with the Mediterranean *status quo* desired in common, it was said, by Italy and Great Britain. Cynics might be tempted to ask whether all Italian Ministers desired the maintenance of a *status quo* in a 'Mediterranean' which included the coast of Tunis, the coast of Tripoli, and even, Lord Lansdowne added, the Adriatic." (Sir Charles Dilke in the *English Review*, October, 1909: "On the Relations of the Powers.") On this subject see *Crispi Memoirs*, vol. ii., chap. v.

subsequent enlargements and additions, it was hoped that it had at least removed any real danger of collision between the two Powers principally concerned. A treaty with France, recognizing a French protectorate over Madagascar, was defended by its authors as the complement of the arrangements of 1890, as to Zanzibar, with Germany. Subsequent treaties with Portugal and Italy made the period decisive as to the future division of the African continent. Both in Great Britain and Germany the arrangements of 1890 were attacked as having yielded too much to the other side. But looking at the treaty from an English point of view, Sir Charles said there had been too many graceful "concessions" all round, and of these he made himself the critic. He did not, however, identify himself with the extreme school of so-called "Imperial" thought, which seemed to consider that in some unexplained manner Great Britain had acquired a prior lien on the whole unoccupied portion of the vast African continent.

But in the treaty of 1890 there was one clause—the last—which stood out by itself in conspicuous isolation, and this Sir Charles never ceased to attack and denounce. It decreed the transfer of Heligoland to Germany. The importance of the acquisition was not fully appreciated at the time even in Germany. What the surrender might some day mean was not understood in Great Britain. On both sides the tendency was to belittle the transaction.* Apart from some minor interests possessed by British fishermen, Lord Salisbury described the value of the island as mainly "sentimental," in the speech in which on July 10th he defended the transaction in the House of Lords.

He supported the proposal by arguing that the island was unfortified, that it was within a few hours' steam of the greatest arsenal of Germany, that if the island remained in our possession an expedition would be despatched to capture it on "the day of the declaration of war, and would arrive considerably before any relieving force

* Reventlow, 38-51. *Hohenlohe Memoirs*, ii. 470-471.

could arrive from our side." "It would expose us to a blow which would be a considerable humiliation." "If we were at war with any other Power it would be necessary for us to lock up a naval force for the purpose of defending this island, unless we intended to expose ourselves to the humiliation of having it taken." This argument, Sir Charles Dilke showed by a powerful criticism of the whole treaty in the columns of the *Melbourne Argus*, went a great deal too far. It could be used for the purpose of defending the cession of the Channel Islands to France. "The Channel Islands lie close to a French stronghold, Cherbourg, and not very far from the greatest of French arsenals, at Brest. They are fortified and garrisoned, but they are feebly garrisoned, and they have not been refortified in recent times, and could not be held without naval assistance, and the argument about locking up our fleet applies in the case of the Channel Islands, and in the case of many other of our stations abroad, as it was said to apply in the case of Heligoland."* Lord Salisbury went on to point out that we had obtained a consideration for the transfer of Heligoland to Germany "on the east coast of Africa," a consideration which consisted mainly in an undertaking from Germany that she would not oppose our assumption of the protectorate of Zanzibar. But, said Sir Charles, the protectorate, when it included not only the island of Zanzibar, but the strip of coast now forming the maritime fringe both of British and of German East Africa, had been over and over again refused by us. "I was one of those," Sir Charles continued, referring to a still earlier chapter of Lord Salisbury's policy during the short-lived Government of 1885-86, "who thought that the policy of 1885 with regard to Zanzibar was a mistaken policy, and that we should have insisted on supporting our East Indian subjects, who had and have the trade on that coast and island in their hands. We had joined with France in arrangements with regard to the whole Zanzibar coast, and when we concluded an agreement

* *Melbourne Argus*, September 10th, 1890. As to Heligoland, see *Life of Granville*, ii. 362, 363, 425; Holland Rose, *Origins of the War*, p. 18.

with Germany about that coast it became necessary for us to force that agreement upon the French on behalf of Germany. A most mistaken policy, in my opinion, as we should otherwise have had the support of France in resisting a German occupation of any portion of the coast, an occupation which it is safe to say would not have been attempted in face of a distinct statement on our part."

Lord Salisbury expressed his inability to understand on what ground those interested in South Africa objected to our recognizing an imaginary German right over a strip of territory giving the Germans access to the upper waters of the Zambesi. He said that our chief difficulty about this territory was that we knew nothing about it; but this consideration, Sir Charles said, "told against the agreement, inasmuch as we had given up a territory which seemed naturally to go with those which have been assigned to the South Africa Company, and which might, for anything we knew to the contrary, be of high value in the future." It was amazing to note how obediently the great majority of the Conservative party followed Lord Salisbury's lead in accepting the cession of Heligoland for no consideration at all, as Sir Charles thought—in any case, for a consideration which must seem inadequate. Contrast, he said, the grounds upon which the cession of Heligoland was defended with those, welcomed by shouts of triumph from the Conservatives, upon which the occupation of Cyprus was justified. It was inconceivable that any man possessed of reasoning powers could support holding Cyprus (which must be a weakness in time of war), and yet argue that Heligoland must be a weakness of a similar kind, and therefore had better be ceded. In the case of Heligoland the vast majority of the islanders were opposed to union with Germany. In the case of Cyprus the vast majority of the islanders were hostile to our rule, while the majority of Heligolanders were favourable to our rule. To cede it against the wish of the population was a step which should not be taken, except for overwhelming national advantage, and that advantage most certainly could not be shown.

"I am one of those," Dilke wrote, summarizing the argument of his speeches, "who are sometimes thought by my own party to be somewhat unduly friendly to the foreign policy of our opponents, a fact which I mention only to show that I do not come to the present matter with strong prejudice. I had heard during the negotiations in Berlin, and some weeks before the publication of the agreement, the whole of its contents with the exception of the cession of Heligoland, and I had formed a strong opinion upon the facts then known to me—that it was a thoroughly bad agreement, most unfavourable to British interests. The only change since that time has been that Heligoland has been thrown in, so that to my mind we are ceding that British possession, for which a very high value might have been obtained, against the wish of the inhabitants, and ceding it for less than no consideration. Lord Salisbury seems to be subject to strange dimness of vision when Africa is concerned. He positively claimed it as a merit, in the course of his speech to the South African deputation, that while the Germans demanded an enormous slice of our Bechuanaland sphere of influence, he had induced them to put back their frontier; but I need hardly point out that no German traveller had ever entered the country in dispute, that we had for years acted on the assumption that it was within our sphere, and that the Germans might as reasonably have set up a claim to the whole sphere of influence and to all the territories previously assigned by us to the British South Africa Company. . . ."

In South-East Africa, too, it was to be remembered that we were dealing with a country which is far less populated by natives and more open to European settlement than was the case with Central Africa.*

"There has been in the whole matter," he declared, "a deplorable absence of decision. If, when Lord Salisbury came into power in 1885, immediately after the occupation by Germany of a slice of South Africa and of the Cameroons, and at the moment of German activity at Zanzibar, he had let it be clearly understood that we should support the policy of Sir John Kirk, our Consul, and the Zanzibar Sultan's rule, and had at the same time abstained from taking steps to facilitate the operations of the Germans in Damaraland,

* See *supra*, p. 84, as to the differences which had arisen in Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet on this subject in 1884-85.

we certainly should have occupied at the present moment a stronger position than we do. But, instead of this, Lord Salisbury allowed our Indian subjects established along the coast to be ruined by German bombardments to which the British fleet was sent to give some sort of moral support. Our explorers have carried the British flag throughout what is now German East Africa and the Congo State. They had made treaties by which the leading native sovereigns of these countries had submitted to our rule, and the Germans are too anxious for our countenance in Europe to have been willing to have risked the loss of Lord Salisbury's friendship had he taken a very different line."*

Though not professing to be himself an "African," Sir Charles also asked how those who professed to come within that description, and speak as advocates of an Imperial policy in the vast and undeveloped regions of the Dark Continent, could quietly accept, as they seemed prepared to do, the break in the so-called Cape to Cairo route which had been allowed to form part of the great agreement of 1890.

"What, then," he asked in 1902, "have the Tories done with the free hand that has been given them? Above all, they have 'made up to' Germany, and this apparently for no definite object and with no definite result. They have given to Germany as far as they could give; they have certainly helped her to procure the renewal of the Triple Alliance, by inducing sanguine Italians to believe that the British fleet will protect them against France, though as a fact we all know that the House of Commons will not allow a British fleet to do anything of the kind. France has wholly given up the Temporal Power, and would not have threatened Italy had Italy held aloof from the Triple Alliance; and, in spite of a recent speech by the Minister of Austria-Hungary which was intended to 'pay out' Italy for her talks with Russia, it is not Austria that would have raised the question. Our Government have given Germany, so far as they could give, a vast tract in Africa in which British subjects had traded, but in most of which no German had ever been. They have also given Germany Heligoland, which they might have sold dear, and which, if Mr. Gladstone had given, they would have destroyed him for giving. . . . All this for what? What have we gained by it?"†

* *Melbourne Argus*, September 6th, 1890.
† *Fortnightly Review*, January, 1902.

The policy of Lord Rosebery and Lord Kimberley from 1892 to 1895 resembled that of Lord Salisbury in so far as it aimed at the settlement of outstanding questions with Germany and France. The apprehensions of trouble with France were still serious, because a constant succession of short Ministries at Paris made any permanent agreement difficult if not impossible. The few Foreign Ministers who were occasionally able to keep their place for any length of time at the Quai d'Orsay were also generally those who as a rule were indifferent, if not actually hostile, to friendship with this country, such as the Duc Decazes in the early days of the Republic, and M. Hanotaux at a later period, who, however, was quite ready to invite Great Britain to join in reckless adventures.* Towards France Lord Rosebery's Government twice took up a firm stand: first in regard to her aggressive action in Siam; and secondly by the clear warning, given through Sir Edward Grey in the House of Commons, that if the expedition of Major Marchand, which was known to be crossing Africa from west to east, reached the Nile Valley, as it eventually did at Fashoda, British interests would be held to be affected. The gravity of this warning was at the moment very inadequately comprehended by the House and by the country, notwithstanding the repeated attempts of Sir Charles to reinforce it before rather unconvinced audiences.

A firm attitude towards France was greatly facilitated through the friendly position adopted towards Great Britain by Count Caprivi (the successor in 1890 of Prince Bismarck in the Chancellorship of the German Empire) and his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baron Marschall. This period indicates the high-water mark of friendly relations between Germany and Great Britain; and though Count Caprivi retired in 1894, when he was succeeded by Prince Hohenlohe, who had special ties with Russia, these friendly relations may be said to have been prolonged, so far as the official relations

* Sir Charles notes in November, 1896, that Mr. Morley reported that 'Hanotaux had told him that he could not understand why England had refused to join in a France, Russia, and England partition of China. "China is a dead man in the house who stinks."'

of the two Governments were concerned, though with ever-diminishing vitality, up to the retirement of Baron Marschall from the Foreign Office in 1897.* In this period German commercial policy took a strong turn towards freer trade, to the great wrath of the feudal and military parties in Prussia, who were the centre of the forces hostile to a good understanding with Great Britain. The secret treaty also which Bismarck had negotiated with Russia, behind the back of his allies, was allowed to lapse, and a more conciliatory attitude was adopted towards the Poles, which gratified Liberal opinion, especially in this country. But even in the time of Baron Marschall there were evidences of the existence in Germany of currents of opinion of a less friendly character, which were able from time to time to assert themselves in African affairs. As Sir Charles Dilke pointed out, Germany had joined with France in 1894 in objecting to, and thereby nullifying, the Congo Treaty of that year with Belgium; and some of the territories which had been handed over to Germany in the neighbourhood of the Cameroons in 1893, with the express object, apparently, of barring a French advance in that region, had been handed over by Germany to France by another treaty in 1895.†

Throughout the period from 1892 to 1895 a Liberal Ministry was in office, but hardly in power. For the next ten years a strong Tory Administration possessing unfettered freedom of action was in real power, with an Opposition weakened by internal dissension. It was not unnatural that, under such discouraging conditions as to home affairs, Sir Charles should have again devoted most of his time to foreign questions and army reform.

"I recognize," Mr. Balfour wrote to him, in regard to some arrangements as to the business of the House, "that no man in the House speaks with greater authority or knowledge on foreign affairs than yourself, and that no

* See the observations of Reventlow, 115-118, and Bülow, *Imperial Germany*, 31, 34.

† Reventlow, pp. 52, 53, admits this. For the treaties themselves, see Hertslet, *The Map of Africa by Treaty*, ii. 658, iii. 999, 1008.

man has a better right to ask for opportunities for criticizing the course in respect of foreign affairs adopted by this or any other Government."*

This recognition was general, so much so that what he spoke or wrote on foreign affairs was constantly translated, reproduced verbatim and commented upon in foreign newspapers—a distinction enjoyed as a rule only by official speakers, and not always by them; while original contributions from his pen were eagerly sought for not only at home, but abroad, especially in France and in the colonies. "Il a pesé constamment sur l'opinion française," the *Figaro* wrote at the time of his death; and his known friendship for France and everything French made plain-speaking at times possible without exciting resentment. Even those—and there were many in England—who disagreed with his criticisms of the details of Lord Salisbury's policy, felt the comprehensive grasp of his facts, and the vast store of knowledge on which he drew; and the members of his own party, many of whom did not altogether go with him, or sometimes, perhaps, quite grasp his standpoint, nevertheless enjoyed, especially while their own oracles were dumb, the sound of the heavy guns which, after his return to Parliament, from time to time poured political shot and shell into the ranks of the self-complacent representatives of the party opposite. In those ranks, too, there were men who at heart agreed very largely with the speaker, while compelled by party discipline to maintain silence. On the other hand, there nearly always came a moment when Conservative approval passed into the opposite, for Sir Charles had no sympathy with the vast if rather confused ideas of general annexation which prevailed in Conservative circles: the policy of mere earth-hunger which Mr. Gladstone had denounced in 1893.†

When Lord Salisbury returned to the Foreign Office in 1895, the policy of "graceful concessions" to France seemed to Sir Charles to have begun again—concessions in Tunis, concessions in Siam, concessions all round—and he returned

* March 31st, 1897. † See above, p. 25

to the attack. Tunis, he again pointed out, dated back to 1878, when M. Waddington received, in his own words as given in his own statement, a spontaneous offer of that country in the words "Take Tunis. England will offer no opposition." But at least certain commercial rights and privileges were then reserved. Now they were gone. Even the nominal independence of Madagascar had finally disappeared.

Sir Charles also drew attention to the one subject of foreign affairs upon which, during the last Parliament, Mr. Curzon never tired of attacking, first Mr. Gladstone's and then Lord Rosebery's Government: this was the advance of the French in Siam. Lord Rosebery had gone to the verge of war with France in checking the French proceedings, and when he left office France was under a promise to evacuate Chantaboon and the provinces of Batambong and Siamrep, and to set up a buffer State on the Mekong. We were then in military occupation of British Trans-Mekong Keng-Cheng. Lord Salisbury came to an arrangement which left France in Chantaboon and these provinces, thus giving away, against our interests, what was not ours to give—as he had done in Tunis—and he evacuated and left to France British Trans-Mekong Keng-Cheng, in which a 50 per cent. *ad valorem* duty had just been put on British goods (from Burmah), a duty from which French goods were free. Not only did Lord Salisbury himself make this arrangement, but he had to submit when France, in alliance with Russia, forced the Government of China to yield territory to France, in direct derogation of China's treaty engagements. Lord Salisbury had since made what was known as the Kiang-Hung Convention with China; and it commenced by setting forth the cession by China to France of territory which had been ceded to China on the express condition that it should not be so ceded to France. This action on the part of China was brought about by the violent pressure of France and Russia at Pekin, which Lord Salisbury passed over. "The defence of his Siam arrangements in the House of Commons consisted in Mr. Curzon, who had become the representative

of the Foreign Office, informing the House that the provinces (which he had formerly declared most valuable) were unimportant to British trade, and in pacifying assurances that the Upper Mekong was not navigable, although a French steamer was actually working on it where Mr. Curzon said no ship could go."*

In the days of these petty collisions in West Africa and all the world over—the "policy of pin-pricks" to which at this time Mr. Chamberlain made fierce allusion in a public speech—Sir Charles arranged to publish a dialogue between himself and M. Lavisse of the French Academy discussing the international situation. "I shall be answering the *Temps* article which replies to you," he wrote to Chamberlain on December 26th, 1898. "Lavisse, being of the Academy, wants a month to polish his style. The dialogue will not appear till February 1st or 15th. There will be nothing in it new to you. What is new and important is that the French, impressed by the fleet, and pressed by their men of business, such as Henri Germain, the Director of the Crédit Lyonnais, and Pallain, now Governor of the Bank of France, want to be friends. I've told these two and others that it is useless to try and settle things unless they will settle Newfoundland. These two came back after seeing Ministers, including the Foreign Minister and the Minister for War, Freycinet, and independently said that they want to settle Newfoundland. They've quite made up their minds that Germany does not want them and will not buy their friendship. I have not seen Monson (the British Ambassador) since my second interview with them, but I told Austin Lee last night to tell him the terms on which I thought that Newfoundland could be settled if you want to settle it. I do not put them on paper as I am sending this by post."

The Newfoundland dispute as to rights of fishing under the Treaties of Utrecht and Paris was one to which Dilke always attached special importance, and immediately after this letter to Chamberlain he wrote upon it in the *Pall Mall Magazine* (February, 1899), describing it as "the most

* Letter to the *Liverpool Daily Post*, December 2nd and 5th, 1898.

dangerous of all international questions, as it is also one of the most difficult."* Great Britain appeared to him to "have gone infinitely beyond the strict terms of the treaty in the concessions to France made for the sake of peace," and to have made proposals which "would not be tolerated for an instant if any of the other ten self-governing colonies were in question," and were only considered because of the "poverty and feebleness of Newfoundland." Lord Salisbury was, in his eyes, no worse a sinner in this respect than the Liberal Government of 1893, except that Lord Salisbury had also made concessions in giving up the existing situation secured by treaty in Madagascar, in Tunis, and in Siam, against which there might have been set off a settlement of this "really dangerous question." He said that in Newfoundland the British navy was being used to coerce British colonists into submission to the French demands; and he foresaw peril to the colonial relation, as well as peril in the international field.

Whether it was possible during the period now under consideration to make an alliance, or even to establish friendly relations with Germany on a solid and permanent basis, is a question which will never fail to be the subject of discussion and controversy: for on it hinged the future of Europe. With an unfriendly France and a German Chancellor—Prince Hohenlohe—aiming, and for a time with some partial success, at re-establishing friendly relations with Russia, the advantages of a good understanding between Great Britain and Germany were obvious; for hardly had the difficulties on the North-West frontiers of India been for the time quieted by the "Pamir" Treaty of 1895,† when

* This dispute was mainly concerned with the question whether the French fishermen possessed an "exclusive" or only a concurrent right in the so-called French shore, under the above-mentioned treaties (see Fitzmaurice, *Life of Shelburne*, 2nd ed., ii. 218). It was finally settled in the Lansdowne-Delcassé agreement of 1904, with other then pending questions. Sir Charles Dilke gave a useful summary of the history of the question and its numerous developments after 1783, in a small volume entitled *The British Empire*, published in 1899.

† This Treaty was made while Lord Kimberley was Foreign Secretary.

the war between Japan and China opened up the long series of events in the Far East which culminated later on in the Russo-Japanese War. In those events all or nearly all the European Great Powers were taking a hand; Germany was aspiring to take a leading part, and had to a certain extent obtained it by the command-in-chief of the Allied Forces being given to Count Waldersee, and by the expedition to relieve the Legations in Pekin. But the Jameson Raid and the congratulatory telegram of the Emperor to President Kruger in January, 1896, showed that Germany might intend also to have a South African policy, which in the hands of a less skilful or a less friendly Foreign Secretary than Baron Marschall might open, notwithstanding all the previous treaties, a new chapter of diplomacy. Meanwhile Baron Marschall, with the hand of a skilful jurist, softened down the meaning of the famous telegram, by a close and minimizing interpretation of the words, and, as a practised diplomatist, went out of his way to meet the wishes of Lord Salisbury, who had proposed that the cost of the recent British Expedition to Dongola should be a charge on the funds of the Egyptian Caisse.

But Baron Marschall's tenure of his post was becoming precarious, and Sir Charles did not believe in the possibility of any alliance or permanent understanding with Germany. He feared, on the contrary, that one result of the policy of concession might be ultimately to tempt France, Germany, and Russia, to form a practical and informal union against Great Britain, similar to that which had proved so great a cause of anxiety in 1884-85. This, though not a formal alliance, had been almost as dangerous as one more specific and avowed, and it was now, he thought, likely to be found to exist with reference to events in China.

After the defeat of China by Japan in 1895, every year brought some new and dangerous development, and the break-up of the Chinese Empire seemed near. Any understanding on the part of Great Britain with Russia, in regard to China, Sir Charles believed to be unreliable, and probably impossible, and Lord Salisbury's policy, which seemed to

have gone out of its way to let Russia into Port Arthur, showed in his opinion deplorable weakness.

Mr. Chamberlain in a speech in the winter of 1898—which was followed by others in the same strain—had seemed almost to propose an alliance with Germany. Following him at Birmingham, Sir Charles pointed out that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had said: "If the policy of isolation which has hitherto been the policy of this country is to be maintained in the future, then the fate of the Chinese Empire may be—probably will be—hereafter decided without reference to our wishes and in defiance of our interests;" and went on to say: "If, on the other hand, we are determined to enforce the policy of the open door, to preserve an equal opportunity for trade with all our rivals, then we must not allow jingoes to drive us into a quarrel with all the world at the same time, and we must not reject the idea of an alliance with those Powers whose interests most closely approximate to our own." No doubt, Sir Charles replied, the Government were pledged to pursue the policy of "equal opportunity for trade," but they had not successfully maintained that policy in action. What were the Powers, he asked, which Mr. Chamberlain had in view when he went on to say: "Unless we are allied to some great military Power, as we were in the Crimean War, when we had France and Turkey as our allies, we cannot seriously injure Russia"? Mr. Chamberlain must have referred to an alliance with Germany. Personally, Dilke said that he "was entirely opposed to a policy of standing and permanent alliances; but was there any prospect that Germany would ever agree to bear in Europe the brunt of defending for us—for that was what it would come to—the most dangerous of our responsibilities? Prince Bismarck's policy on the subject had been avowed over and over again; he had foreseen these suggestions, and had rejected them in advance. Speaking in 1887, Prince Bismarck said: 'Our friendship for Russia suffered no interruption during the time of our wars, and stands to-day beyond all doubt. . . . We shall not . . . let anyone throw his lasso round our neck in order to

embroil us with Russia.' And again in 1888: 'No Great Power can, in the long-run, cling to the wording of any treaty in contradiction to the interests of its own people. It is sooner or later compelled to say, "We cannot keep to that," and must justify this announcement as well as it can.'* In 1890 the present German Emperor renewed the Triple Alliance, and the relations also of Germany and Russia had never, he believed, been closer than they were at the present time. Any notion of a permanent or standing alliance with Germany against Russia was, in short, a Will-o'-the-wisp. Opposed as he was to the whole policy of alliances as contrary to the true interests of this country, he was specially opposed to this particular proposal, because it was calculated to lead our people to think that they could rely on the strong arm of another Power instead of only on their own strong arm."†

Yet a strong action in the Near East, Sir Charles thought, might have compensated for a feebler policy on the Pacific Coast. In Armenia, Christians for whom Great Britain was answerable under the Treaty of Berlin were being massacred, but Lord Salisbury did nothing to help them. In November, 1896, there was a faint stir of public opinion, but many of the suggestions made in regard to what ought to be done were unwise.‡

"No one," Sir Charles had said in 1896, "would protest more emphatically than he did against some of the advice which had been given. One of the ablest journalists and highest of financial authorities, Mr. Wilson, had suggested the landing of a few troops and the deportation of the

* See, too, *Bismarck Memoirs*, ii., pp. 258, 259.

† The speech of Mr. Chamberlain referred to above was made at Birmingham. It was followed by speeches at Wakefield on December 8th, 1898, and at Leicester on November 20th, 1899.

‡ *November 4th*, 1896.—'Morley told me that in order to force the hand of the Turks, before July, 1895, Kimberley had proposed to force the Dardanelles, and that Harcourt had stopped it. Mr. Gladstone had written to Morley to insist on his speaking about Armenia and to complain of his lukewarmness. I said: "But Mr. G. in 1880, when something could have been done, confined himself to what he called 'friendly' words to the Sultan."' See on the whole subject *Crispi Memoirs*, vol. ii., chap. ix.

Sultan to Cyprus. The defences of the Dardanelles were not such as could be very easily forced even by the British fleet. . . . No British Admiral, even if he succeeded in forcing the Dardanelles, would have troops to land who could overcome the Turkish guard, an army corps, and the excited Turkish population." Elsewhere, with prophetic foresight, he showed that the forcing of the Dardanelles could not be carried out without "heavy loss, possibly tremendous loss, and that the loss of a first-class British ironclad is equivalent to the loss of an army corps with all its guns."*

Crete was now again in a state of chronic rebellion against Turkish rule; and Turkish methods of repression only stimulated the popular demand to be joined to Greece. Sir Charles Dilke thought that, if the Powers really wished to coerce Turkey to bring about better government within its dominions, coercion could most safely begin in the Greek islands, where European fleets could absolutely control the issue and no question of Continental partition need arise. In Crete the Sultan could, Sir Charles believed, have been compelled to accept a nominal sovereignty, such as he retained over Cyprus; and the aspiration towards Hellenic unity, the need for Hellenic expansion, might thus have been satisfied.

If England had taken "instant and even isolated action," France would, he thought, not have thwarted British policy. "The effect would ultimately have been the addition of Crete to the Greek kingdom under the auspices, perhaps, of all the Powers, perhaps of the Powers less Germany, perhaps of only three or four of them."†

The occasion was missed, and war, declared by Turkey against Greece, followed, and years of anarchy in Crete. The Ministers of the Powers "even in the free Parliaments of the United Kingdom and France" "used pro-Turkish language," and attacked those who, because they upheld the traditional Liberal policy of both countries, were accused of abetting the Greeks.

* Letter to the *Macclesfield Chronicle*, September 19th, 1896.
† *Ibid.*

"The blockade by the fleets of the Powers became pro-Turkish, and Europe took sides against Greece in the war. If Greece had been allowed to hold Crete, she could have exchanged it against Thessaly, if the worst had come to the worst, without those financial sacrifices which are now necessary.* The very claim of the Powers to have localized the war by stopping the Slav States from attacking Turkey is in itself a claim to have interfered on one side."

When Greece was defeated, "the majority in the Parliament of the United Kingdom, if not of the British people," Sir Charles wrote, "professed that their burning sympathies for Greece had been destroyed by Greek cowardice, although the stand, at Domoko, of ill-supplied young troops against an overwhelmingly superior force of Turkish veterans deserved fairer criticism." He interpreted his own duty differently, and when the Hellenic cause was most unpopular he continued to express his faith in the "rising nationalities of the Eastern Mediterranean," and looked forward with confidence to a future in which Palmerston's generous surrender of the Ionian Islands should be emulated by a new act of Liberal statesmanship. "There can be little doubt that Cyprus, as a part of a great scheme for strengthening the elements of the Eastern Mediterranean that are hopeful for the future, will not be kept out of the arrangement by any reluctance on the part of the United Kingdom to let its inhabitants follow the tendencies of their race!"†

"Oh for an hour of Canning or of Palmerston!" he said, at a great public meeting in the North in October, 1898. "Canning was a Tory, a Tory Foreign Secretary of State, a Tory Prime Minister, although at odds with the Duke of Wellington upon some subjects. Lord Palmerston was looked upon by many Radicals as a Whig, but in foreign affairs he had never exhibited that carelessness and that absence of a willingness to run risks for the sake of freedom which no doubt marred his conduct of home affairs. Canning had seen the interest of

* Such a proposal had actually been made in 1881 by Prince Bismarck. *Life of Goschen*, i. 214; *Life of Granville*, ii. 226.

† The above Notes on Crete relate to the period when war broke out, in 1897, between Greece and Turkey, and the Turks invaded Thessaly.]

Great Britain in maintaining the Greek cause, as Palmerston had seen her interest in strengthening Greece by allowing the Republic of the Ionian Isles, of which we had the protectorate, to join her after the downfall of the Prince called by Palmerston 'the spoilt child of autocracy, King Otho.' Canning had consistently refused, in circumstances of far greater difficulty and danger than those which attended the Greek or Cretan questions in our times, to be dragged at the heels of the great despotic Powers. Canning resolved not only to assist the Greek cause, but in doing so to maintain the superiority of British influence in the Eastern Mediterranean; and, seeing the course which was clear in the interest of Europe and in our own interest, he determined to settle the question in his own way, as he at the same time settled that of South America, to the immense advantage of this country, which now had found in South America one of the best of all markets for her trade. There never was a greater loss to England than when Canning died as Prime Minister and was succeeded in office by one of those fleeting figures who, in the language of Disraeli, were but transient and embarrassed phantoms.* The deeds of Canning in the questions of Greece and South America, his regard at once for liberty and for Britain, might be read in all the lives of that great Minister, and what Palmerston did of the same kind in the case of Italy was perfectly known."

In consequence of observations of this kind, he had to defend himself more than once against the charge of "Jingoism," as the cant term of the day had it; and more particularly in the debate on foreign policy on June 10th, 1898, when it was made by an old political friend, Mr. Leonard Courtney.

"I am one of those," Dilke replied, "who are in favour of large armaments for this country, and believe in increasing the strength of our defences for the sake of peace; and one of the very reasons why I desire that is because I repudiate the idea of making our policy depend upon the policy of others. I have always repudiated, and never ceased to repudiate, the policy of grab which is commonly associated with the name of Jingo. . . . I submit that the worst policy in these matters is to have regard to our own rights only, and not to the rights of others. We want our country to

* Lord Goderich, Prime Minister from August 8th, 1827, to January 8th, 1828.

be viewed with that respect which men will ever cherish for unbending integrity of purpose. We should be more scrupulous with regard to asserting nominal rights which we do not intend to maintain.

"When such transactions are criticized, the Government always reply by asking: 'Would you have gone to war at this or that particular point, for this or that particular object?' It always appears to me in these cases that there is some confusion in our minds about this risk of war on such occasions. If the intention of the other Power is to avoid war, war will be avoided when you quietly hold your own. But if the intention of the other Power is war, there will be no lack of pretexts to bring it about."

His policy, therefore, would have been to advance no claims but such as could be made good, if need arose, by England's own carefully measured resources in connection with those of France.

It was, however, impossible at this time to focus public attention upon events in the Mediterranean, or even in the Nile Valley. The eyes of all politicians alike were becoming fixed upon a different part of the African continent.

Mr. Chamberlain had taken the Colonial Office in 1895, and it was in reply to a short speech from Sir Charles Dilke during the brief Autumn Session of that year that he expressed himself glad to outline his general policy, and spoke of finding in the Colonies an undeveloped estate, which he was determined to develop. His phrases caught the popular imagination then as always. Colonial enterprise was the theme of all pens and tongues. Then on New Year's Day of 1896 had come the Jameson Raid. But in the stormy chapters of Parliamentary life which followed Sir Charles took little part, beyond commending Mr. Chamberlain's promptitude in condemning the Raid. The speech which he made in the vote of censure on the colonial policy of Mr. Chamberlain, moved on January 30th, 1900, as an amendment to the Address, by Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice on behalf of the Opposition, was of an independent character, dealing more with the military and naval aspects of the position than those purely political. But, though standing rather apart from

the general line of attack, the speech was recognized as one of the most weighty contributions to the debate, as it brought home to the country on how dangerously narrow a margin of strength the policy of Mr. Chamberlain rested, and how entirely it owed its success to the maintenance of the navy of this country, which German Navy Bills were about to threaten. Four years later, when the German naval preparations were assuming a definite shape, he repeated these warnings in a still more decisive manner by a speech which attracted great attention in Germany itself, as well as at home.*

Sir Charles disapproved of the Boer War,† but he held that when the country was seized by the war-fever interposition was useless: it did more harm than good both at home and abroad. Staying in Paris, in the early days of the contest, when we were suffering and beaten for the moment, he told those who commiserated us and threatened European complications to "wait and see," laughing at the idea that England could be permanently at a disadvantage, but not entering into the abstract merits of the question. If forced to speak, he admitted that the war was "unwise," but his utterances were very few. It, however, raised a general principle, inducing him to recall facts which had been too frequently forgotten. The party which was now opposing government by Chartered Company was, he said, the party which had revived it in 1881 in the case of North Borneo; while the Tories, who then had condemned that method of colonization, were now enthusiastic for it. Sir Charles, who had opposed the system in regard to Borneo, where it was attended by little danger, now pointed out that not only had it produced the Jameson Raid in South

* "Der frühere Unterstaatsecretär des Auswärtigen, und sehr angesehene Sir Charles Dilke, wies damals auf Deutschland hin und sagte: man vergrössere dort die Flotte mit einer ausgewohnten Schnelligkeit und richte sich damit öffentlich gegen England" (Reventlow, p. 242).

† "I am myself opposed to the Milner policy, which led up to the South African War. But in spite of the Natal events I do not share the opinion either that the war itself will be a long one, or that foreign complications will arise" ("Risk of European Coalition," *Review of the Week*, November 4th, 1899).

Africa, but that on the West Coast the Niger Company threatened to involve England in differences with France by action which England could not control. These were conclusive proofs that the principle which in 1881 he had resisted to the point of seriously differing from his official chief was fraught with inconvenience and dangers. The Niger Company's position, however, was the affair of political specialists; South African policy was embroiled with the fortunes of a gigantic gambling speculation.*

The Transvaal War destroyed whatever prospects there might have been of a permanent understanding with Germany, and Mr. Chamberlain before the war was over had to make at least one speech which brought on himself the fiercest denunciations of the German Press, when he replied in vigorous language to the charge of cruelty brought against the British military authorities in Africa. The absolute mastery of the sea possessed by Great Britain probably alone prevented the Emperor forcing his Ministers into some imprudent act; and it was clearly seen that Count von Bülow, who had succeeded Baron Marschall as Foreign Secretary in June, 1897, and afterwards succeeded Prince Hohenlohe as Chancellor in 1900, though not desiring a conflict, and convinced, as he has since told the world, that none need come, was nevertheless less friendly than his predecessors, and intended to pursue rigidly the policy of a free hand with a strong navy behind it.† Events were visibly fighting on the side of those who saw that France was the only possible ally of Great Britain, and that the only other alternative was, not an alliance with Germany, but a return to the policy of "splendid isolation." The apologist of

* This is recalled by a fact in Sir Charles's personal history. His son became entitled on coming of age in September, 1895, to a legacy of £1,000. Sir Charles offered him in lieu of that bequest 2,000 "Chartered South African shares." Had he accepted, he could, when the legacy became due, 'have sold them for £17,000 and cleared £16,000 profit! But he refused them when offered, and,' says Dilke, 'not thinking them things for a politician, I sold them, and (purposely) at a loss.'

† Bülow, *Imperial Germany* (English translation), p. 47. A later edition, with considerable alterations and additions, was published in 1916.

Prince von Bülow has himself told the world that the policy of an absolutely "free hand" now inaugurated by the new Chancellor was evidently one, in itself, of great difficulty, because Germany might frequently be compelled to change front; and, to use an expression attributed to Bismarck, might have to "face about" until friendship with this country became impossible. The prognostication was soon to be justified.*

It was perhaps the decisive moment in the relations of Great Britain and Germany, when Count von Bülow, with the ink hardly dry on the Anglo-German treaty of October, 1900, which was supposed to be intended to protect China against further Russian advances on the north, cynically went out of his way to make a statement in the German Parliament that the treaty did not apply to Manchuria. The reply of the British Government was the Anglo-Japanese treaty of February 11th, 1902.†

In February, 1901, a typical article from Sir Charles's pen appeared in the *Figaro*, strongly urging the absolute necessity for the creation of really cordial relations between Great Britain and France, which he considered were the sure and sufficient guarantee of European peace. It was true, no doubt, that the increasing strength and efficiency of the French army were a guarantee, up to a certain point, of peace with Germany, just as the weakness of the French army had been an active temptation to Germany in 1870 to attack France. The joint action of the Powers in China at the moment was also itself a sign of improved relations. Nevertheless, as Moltke had said, Germany would remain armed for half a century after 1870, if she intended, as she did intend, to keep Alsace-Lorraine; and as Europe had for the present to remain an armed camp, more could hardly be hoped than to maintain peace, however burdensome the cost. Europe,

* Reventlow, p. 159.

† Reventlow (*German Foreign Policy*, 1888-1914) speaks of this incident as the "Wendepunkt der Britischen Politik und der Deutsch-Englischen Beziehungen" (p. 168). See, too, Bérard, *La Révolte de l'Asie*, pp. 192-194, 208, 209, 293.

Sir Charles urged, should try to realize that a great war would probably be fatal, whoever might be the victor, to her commercial world-supremacy—as the great and ruinous burdens, which would everywhere result, would surely cause that supremacy to pass to America. There the development of the resources, not of the United States only, but also of the Argentine Confederation, ought to give pause to those who did not look beyond the immediate future and seemed unable to realize that a Europe laden with all the effects of some gigantic struggle would prove a weak competitor with the New World on the other side of the Atlantic. To remind Frenchmen that the English have not always been victorious in war was no very difficult task; but he ventured to remind Englishmen also that, as the English army was quite inadequate to take a large part in a Continental war under the changed conditions of modern warfare, Great Britain and France, while united, should more than ever walk warily, and distrust the counsels of those who occasionally in Great Britain spoke lightly of war. It was easy to talk about the victories of Marlborough and Wellington; but the military history of England was really a very chequered one, and of this Englishmen were, unfortunately, mostly unaware. Our military prestige had never been great in the commencement of our wars, and, as he had said in the recent debates on the Boer War,* we had too often had to "muddle through." On more than one occasion—in America, for example, during the Seven Years' War, and more recently in New Zealand—we had only been got out of our difficulties by the help of our own colonists. Here at least was a great future source of as yet undeveloped strength. The disastrous Walcheren Expedition was on record; even Wellington had had to retire over and over again in the earlier period of the Peninsular War; in the Crimea we had not shown any great military quality beyond the bravery of our troops. These were truths, unpalatable truths, but they had to be uttered, if on the one hand the cause of army reform in Great Britain was

* House of Commons, February 1st, 1900.

to prosper, and if on the other France was not to reckon too much on the assistance of a British army on the Continent of Europe, especially in the earlier stages of a war.*

In a cordial understanding with France, therefore, Sir Charles Dilke considered to lie the sheet-anchor of British foreign policy and the best guarantee of peace. In 1898 the arrival of the French force at Fashoda, on the Nile, had brought things to a crisis, and the firm attitude then adopted by Lord Salisbury at length convinced France, as Sir Charles always believed it would, that she must make her choice between Germany and Great Britain. In the action of Lord Lansdowne, who had succeeded Lord Salisbury at the Foreign Office in 1900, and in the policy eventually embodied in the Anglo-French agreement of 1904, Sir Charles recognized the views which persistently, but not always successfully, he had urged for many years on his own friends in France and England. But the new departure was only rendered possible by the appearance at the French Foreign Office of a statesman who, after the bitter experience of the final failure of the policy of "pin-pricks" before Lord Salisbury's firm stand in the Fashoda affair, boldly threw his predecessors overboard, and managed to make himself the inevitable Foreign Minister of France for a long period of years, successfully maintaining himself in office against every competitor and every rival, while other Ministers came and went. Late, perhaps too late, the policy of Gambetta was revived by M. Delcassé, and it held its own.

By 1903, owing to the complete change in the attitude of France, matters had so much improved as between England and the Republic that Sir Charles could write in the *Empire Review* of "An Arrangement with France" as possible, basing himself on recent articles in *La Dépêche Coloniale*, which had been the extreme anti-British organ. "That the French colonial party should have come frankly to express the desire which they now entertain for an arrangement of all pending questions between the English and

* *Figaro*, February 11th, 1901.

the French is indeed a return towards relations better than any which have existed since Gambetta's fall from power."

But this improvement in the relations of the two countries was materially aided by the influence of the personality of King Edward VII., which Sir Charles fully recognized, as he also did one of the consequences, which was perhaps not so fully seen by others. "The wearer of the crown of England plays in foreign affairs," he wrote, "a part more personal than in other matters is that of the constitutional King. No one can deny that there are advantages, and no one can pretend that there are never drawbacks, attendant on this system. It is not my purpose to discuss it, but it makes the adoption in this country of control by a Parliamentary Committee difficult, if not impossible."* "The great and sudden improvement in the relations between the English-speaking world and France is largely due to the wisdom and courtesy with which the King made clear to France that there was no ground for the suspicions which prevailed."† But wisdom and courtesy were not a little aided by the royal habit of mixing easily with men at home and abroad, just as, on the other hand, the long

* *English Review*, October, 1909. Article by Sir C. Dilke.

† *Quarterly Review*, July, 1905, p. 313. Article by Sir C. Dilke.

With France Sir Charles had for the moment again a certain official relation, having been placed on the Royal Commission charged with British interests at the Paris Exhibition—an honour due to him not only in his own right, but as his father's son. At this moment also, when relations between the neighbouring countries were severely strained, he gave to the Luxembourg the reversion of Gambetta's portrait, and sent the portrait itself to be placed among the works of Legros on exhibition in June, 1900. M. Léonce Bénédez, curator of the Luxembourg, in writing to press for the chance of exhibiting the picture, said:

"Je m'excuse vivement de mon importunité, mais je serais très désireux que notre public peut être admis à juger Legros sur cette belle œuvre. De plus, je serais, en même temps, très heureux que les amis de votre grande nation, plus nombreux que la sottise de quelques journalistes ne voudrait le laisser croire, fussent à même d'apprécier la pensée élevée et délicate de l'illustre homme d'état anglais qui, au milieu des circonstances présentes, a tenu à donner à notre pays une marque si touchante de sympathie en lui offrant le portrait d'un de ses plus glorieux serviteurs."

The exhibition drew Sir Charles and Lady Dilke for a summer visit to Paris, and it was during this visit that the sculptor Roty executed his medallion of Sir Charles.

retirement of Queen Victoria had been injurious in an opposite direction. This feeling finds expression in the fragment of commentary in which Sir Charles dealt with the change of Sovereigns:

'The Accession Council after the Queen's death was a curious comment on history. History will tell that Victoria's death plunged the Empire into mourning, and that favourable opinion is more general of her than of her successor. Yet the Accession Council, attended almost solely by those who had reached power under her reign, was a meeting of men with a load off them. Had the King died in 1902, the Accession Council of his successor would not have been thus gay; there would have been real sorrow.'

Sir Charles thought hopefully of the situation at this moment, and there is a letter dated as far back as 1900 in which Mr. Hyndman noted the "unusual experience" of finding an Englishman who took a more favourable view of France than he did himself, and expressed his fear that Sir Charles underrated "the strength of the National party."* But, notwithstanding the alliance of France with Russia, the action of Russia in the Far East in the period covered by the events which ended in the Japanese War had not diminished Sir Charles's rooted dislike of any idea of *entente* or alliance between Russia and Great Britain. He considered that Sir Edward Grey meant to be Foreign Secretary in the next Liberal Government, and was intent on making an arrangement or alliance with Russia to which he would subordinate every other consideration. "Grey," he wrote early in 1905 to Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, "has always favoured the deal with Russia. I hope I may be able to stay outside the next Government to kill it, which I would do if outside, not within. This," he said, alluding to the recent death

* How well he understood France may perhaps best be judged by an article written, at the desire of M. Labori, for the *Grande Revue* in December, 1901. It is called "Torpeur Républicaine," and begins with the observation that English Radicals are tempted to think French Republicans more reactionary than any English Tories, for the reason that all English parties had practically, if not in theory, accepted municipal Socialism. "In France," he said, "the electors of certain cities return Socialist municipal councils. They are all but absolutely powerless. We, on the other hand, elect Tory or Whig municipalities, and they do the best of Socialist work."

of Lady Dilke, "assumes that I regain an interest in affairs which I have wholly lost. I am well, but can at present think of nothing but of the great person who is gone from my side."* At this time the old controversy was again raging, both at home and in India, over the question of the defence of the North-Western Frontier of India; and a recent Governor-General and his Commander-in-Chief in India, it was believed, had not altogether seen eye to eye. The latter was credited with very extensive views as to the necessity of an increase in the number of British troops, with a view to the defence of the frontier against Russian attack. Sir Charles put neither the danger of a Russian invasion nor the general strength of Russia as a military nation so high as did some who claimed to speak with authority; and he did not believe that we had any reason for constant fear in India or elsewhere, or to seek alliances, in order to avoid a Russian attack on India. The vulnerability of Russia on the Pacific, which he had always pointed to, was demonstrated in the Japanese War; as well as the miserable military administration of Russia, which he had indicated thirty-eight years before as a permanent source of weakness, certain to be exposed whenever Russia undertook operations on a large scale at any great distance from her base.† The Japanese alliance, he believed, could never be directly utilized for resisting in Afghanistan an attack by Russia on India. Happily, as he considered, the facts had demonstrated that there was no need for such a display of timidity as would be involved in marching foreign troops across India to defend it on the frontier.‡

But if he thought that an alliance with Russia was not a necessity for a sound British foreign policy, on the other hand he was equally convinced that a good understanding with the United States of America was such a necessity. He believed that if fresh subjects of difference were not

* February 2nd, 1905.

† In *Greater Britain*, ii. 299-312.

‡ *Monthly Review*, December, 1905. It is to be observed that this argument does not involve any criticism of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty considered as a defensive measure elsewhere.

created, and any remaining questions of difference—like the Fisheries—were settled, as the *Alabama* and Alaska questions had been settled, the old Jeffersonian tradition of suspicion of English policy would die out, even in the Democratic party, and that no obstacle would then remain to prevent the co-operation of all the branches of the race in a common policy.

In a speech made in June, 1898, he had referred to the improved relations with the United States in terms which gave credit for the improvement mainly to Sir Julian Pauncefote, then Ambassador at Washington, for whose services he had the greatest admiration.* When, in 1896, the question of Venezuela had threatened to make trouble between the two English-speaking Powers, he counted the claims of Great Britain in respect of the frontiers of Guiana as "dust in the balance" when weighed against the advantage of not "running across the national line of policy of the United States." He desired to sink all such petty affairs in a policy of Anglo-American co-operation in the Far East. Rivals for trade in China they must be, but the interest of both lay in working for the "open door" which admitted a friendly rivalry. He wrote in the *American Independent* for May 1st, 1899: "The will of the United States, if it be in accordance with the will of Great Britain and of the Australian Commonwealth—the will, in other words, of the English-speaking peoples—will be paramount in the Pacific if they are united"; and he was never weary of urging the improvement in England's relations with the United States which would follow from a friendly settlement with Ireland.†

* Sir Julian Pauncefote had previously been Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs for many years.

† In *Present Position of European Politics*, 1887, he had said: "I, for one, still have hope that the causes of estrangement between Great Britain and the chief of her daughter-countries, which are mainly to be found in the friction produced by the Irish Question, may even within our lifetime be removed, and the tie of blood, and tongue, and history and letters, again drawn close." And in a note written later in his own copy are the words: "It is for the Americans of the United States to decide how far towards firm alliance this shall be carried." Cf. *Life of Beaconsfield*, iv. 231.

Bearing in mind all these considerations, he believed, notwithstanding all the wars and the rumours of wars, that the Great Armageddon so much dreaded could be avoided by diplomacy combined with proper measures of defence. The long chain of events formed by the Sino-Japanese War, the Boer War, the Boxer Rebellion, the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, and the Russo-Japanese War, were in his opinion "secondary events," however important, appearing to threaten the peace of Europe from time to time—very disquieting, no doubt, and ominous occasionally of yet worse things—but things such as diplomacy had conjured away before, and ought to be able to conjure away again. He did not think that Morocco, long regarded at the Foreign Office as a danger-point, would ever prove a sufficient object to induce Germany to break the general peace. She would threaten, take all she could get, and then withdraw with the spoils, just avoiding the danger-point; and so it no doubt turned out to be in 1905-06 at the time of the troubles which ended in the Algeciras Conference. But he recognized the personal character of the German Emperor as a new factor of danger in the situation.

The essential point since 1871, he wrote in 1905, had been that there never had existed a serious and settled intention of making the much-dreaded "European War" on the part of any of those with whom the great decision rested. There was, he said, to the good this main consideration—that, if any Power had intended war, a sufficient pretext could always have been found, yet the war had not come. The security for the maintenance of the long "armed peace" was, in fact, this: that no Power had really intended war, or intended it now. What the consequences would be was too well known by the responsible leaders. The sudden heats which most seemed to jeopardize peace had arisen in regard to questions not of European importance, mostly outside Europe, where sometimes on one side or the other, and sometimes upon both, tactful treatment in advance, and what might be styled "a long view," would have saved the world from trouble altogether, and ought to do

so in future under analogous circumstances, whenever the question of the Bagdad Railway and the remaining questions relating to Africa came up for final settlement.*

The guarantee of peace he believed to lie in the policy of *ententes*, but on condition that the policy begun by Lord Lansdowne and M. Delcassé should aim at agreement between two Powers only, and be limited to specific objects.† Beyond this it was dangerous to go. An *entente* between more than two Powers, as distinct from one between two only, reminded him of an American game of cards which he had seen played in the Far West. This game when played by two persons was called *euchre*, but when played by three persons was called by another and very disagreeable name, because it so frequently ended in the use of knives. The Franco-Italian agreements of 1898 and 1900, the Anglo-French agreement of 1904, the Franco-Spanish agreement of 1904, the agreements between Japan and Russia which had followed and grown out of the Portsmouth Treaty of September, 1905, the Anglo-Japanese Treaty which followed, and the Anglo-Russian agreement of 1907 as to Persia, were guarantees for peace, because they came within the above definition. It does not appear, however, that he considered the alliance of France and Russia, dating so far as was then known from 1895, as a real guarantee for peace, or that he shared the later views attributed to Gambetta, of the desirability of an *entente* between Great Britain, France, and Russia.‡ He was

* *English Review*, October, 1909.

† See the same opinion expressed in 1871, Vol. I., p. 133.

‡ "M. Gaston Thomson publishes in the *Matin* extracts from letters by Gambetta to M. Ranc. In one letter, written apparently at the time of the crisis of 1875, Gambetta says:

"'You must know that the forger of the Ems despatch is about to commit another act of treachery. But our calmness and self-possession will prevent us from falling into the same trap as in 1870. The croakings of a sinister raven will not plunge us into folly this time. He has understood his mistake. He has been able to transform a divided and impotent Germany into a great, strong, disciplined Empire. For us and for himself he was less well inspired when he exacted the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine, which was the germ of death for his work. . . . Until they have remedied this error no one will disarm. The world's peace, which is so necessary for all peoples, will remain always at the mercy of an incident.' In

strongly convinced that the improvement of the French army since 1871 had been so great that it afforded by itself a sufficient reason to give Germany pause, and he believed that the German Emperor considered the French army better in some respects than his own.* An alliance between the two Western Powers and Russia might, in given circumstances, on the one hand encourage the party of *revanche* and push the country into dangerous adventures, and on the other tempt the war party in Germany to try again some extreme course, as it had in 1875.

From this point of view Dilke regarded with suspicion and anxiety the journeys of the King on the Continent after 1905, unaccompanied by a Secretary of State according to the ancient constitutional practice, but accompanied by the Permanent Under-Secretary of State from the Foreign Office, a former Ambassador to St. Petersburg. This gave plausible opportunities for encouraging the belief then prevalent in Germany that some mysterious policy was being devised, outside the ordinary channels of diplomacy and Parliamentary knowledge—a policy which, with the

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order to prepare France to meet the future, Gambetta strove to bring about the alliance which to-day unites France, Great Britain, and Russia. In a striking passage he writes:

"'The number and importance of Russia's difficulties grow every day. L—— keeps the Prince of Wales informed day by day of the difficulties of that Power. The political ambitions of Russia will be impeded by Austria, who is already assuming a hostile attitude. She is exerting pressure upon Rumania. Do you see, as a consequence, Austria allying herself with Rumania and Turkey against Russia? What a conflict!

"'The Prince of Wales, however, foresees it. He does not share the hostility of a section of the English nation against Russia. With all his young authority he fights against measures which may be prejudicial to Russia. I see in him the makings of a great statesman. . . .

"'I desire that our enemies should be Russia's enemies. It is clear that Bismarck wants an alliance with the Austrians. Russia must therefore be made to see that we might be her ally. . . . Since the Revolution our country exerts great influence in Europe. Before long I see Russia and England at our side, if we only have a proper internal policy'" (*Times*, December 30th, 1915).

* Baron Beyens says that in 1911 it was the general opinion that in many respects the French was in advance of the German army (*L'Allemagne avant la Guerre*, p. 229). *Ibid.*, p. 220.

aid of France and Russia, was to take the shape of encircling Germany with enemies, and cutting her off from legitimate development. These anxieties were stimulated by a considerable amount of foolish writing in London newspapers, and still more foolish and unauthorized talk.

"France and Russia," he wrote in 1908, "are drawn together by geographical considerations — given the detachment of French territory to the benefit of Germany in 1871. It did not need the parade of an alliance to cause Kings and statesmen to recognize the fact. War was made impossible in 1875—the last occasion when the well-informed thought renewed German attack on France probable—by the absolute refusal of the German Emperor; but behind that refusal lay the certainty that Russia would not forward the aims of the Prussian military party, as she had done, for a consideration, in 1870. It is, perhaps, too trivial a suggestion, but one which comes inevitably to the mind, that the householder is apt to be friendly with the man who lives next door but one, on account of their common dislike of their next-door neighbour. During the 'reign of force,' still extant upon the Continent of Europe, a more appropriate simile may be found in the proverbial habit of each of two men, in a street fight, frightening his opponent by recognition of a personage in the background. That Germany, however ambitious, and however boastful of her military strength, should be rendered nervous by the menace of Franco-Russian co-operation is a consideration modified only by the universal recognition of the desire of France for self-respecting peace. As soon as another Power is suspected of any intention of making use of the Franco-Russian co-operation for the purpose of isolating Germany, a dangerous situation has arisen.

"We are so confident in our own profound knowledge of our wish for European peace that we hardly realize the extreme danger for the future which is caused by all suggestion that we have succeeded in isolating Germany, or are striving to bring about that result. The London articles written in violent support of a supposed alliance did the harm; and to anyone who keeps touch for himself of Continental opinion the harm was undoubted, and tended to produce several undesirable results.

'There is a word to be addressed to those who believe that our navy is our true defence, until the progress of

pacific thought in the working classes of all countries has rendered the other Powers as peaceful as France. Those who crowed over the isolation of Germany took the best means of increasing the German Fleet, and contributed at the same time, by the proposed inflation of our expeditionary force, to the weakening of the British Navy.

"The true explanation of the *entente*, and it needs no better, is to be found in the defence of its essentially pacific nature by one of its original authors, M. Delcassé.* He had his faults as a Minister, and on two occasions provoked alarms or dangers, which afterwards, however, he did more than any other man to allay. Should circumstances change and European war become likely, as it has not in fact been likely since 1871, the basis for our alliances, if we needs must have them, lies in our peaceful policy, our vigour, and our fleet.

"Thanks to the alarm itself, which the harum-scarum articles excited, prudence will once more gain control of our foreign affairs. The *entente* will continue: Italy, we may hope, will not once more be scared out of her improved relations with Powers outside the Triplice. Recent occurrences may be turned to useful end, by courage in speaking out displayed by those who insist that a policy, profoundly peaceful in fact, shall not be exposed to being represented as directed against any one of the European Powers."

Italy, he believed—and events have justified the forecast—would be compelled by the pressure of circumstances to leave the Triple Alliance. How far Germany would be able to keep a permanent hold on Austria-Hungary might also, he thought, be doubtful, as it would largely depend on the developments of home issues in Austria itself, as to which prophecy was always rash. Like other statesmen of an older school, he still probably clung to the hope that the Dual Empire might yet be gradually converted into a Federal State, in which the Slavonic populations of the Empire would play a larger part and would not submit to take marching orders from Berlin in regard to policy in the Balkans.†

* M. Delcassé had to resign office in 1905, under German pressure, in connection with the controversies about Morocco.

† A short time before his death, in 1902, Lord Kimberley said to Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice: "If ever there is another Liberal Government—which is perhaps doubtful—Grey or you, or both

Both in 1908 and 1909, in the debates on the Foreign Office Votes in the House of Commons, Sir Charles had expressed apprehensions of the development of Great Britain's *entente* with Russia, in regard to Persia, into something far more extensive, and therefore dangerous—into something, in fact, very like an "alliance." He feared that in the Bosnian question it had been pushed to extreme limits. The result, he said, had been to lead to a diplomatic humiliation. He claimed also that recent debates in the French Chamber, which had taken place at the time of the fall of M. Clemenceau's Ministry in the later half of 1909, showed that a large body of French opinion shared this view.*

With these preoccupations present to his mind he spoke on the last occasion on which he addressed the House of Commons at any length on foreign affairs—on July 22nd, 1909—when the policy of Sir Edward Grey in regard to the final annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary was discussed on the Foreign Office Vote. He attacked this policy because it seemed to confirm the belief in the alleged tendency of the Foreign Office to extend the Anglo-Russian arrangement in regard to Persia into a general *entente*, with the probable result of producing

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of you, may have something to say to foreign affairs. Now, remember, there is on no account to be any quarrelling with Austria. She has been the only steady friend we have had in Europe—I mean since 1866. The Hungarians have always been our friends. So, I repeat, *no quarrelling with Austria.* I have said the same thing to Grey." (Notes communicated by Lord Fitzmaurice). See, too, the opinion of M. Ribot, cited in René Henry's *Questions d'Autriche-Hongrie*, pp. 176-178: "Quant à l'Autriche, nos rapports avec elle ont toujours été bons; ils ont été pleins, non seulement de courtoisie, mais de quelque chose de plus; parceque l'Autriche sait que, de toutes les puissances européennes, la France est la dernière qui pourrait souhaiter que l'Empire d'Autriche, garantie nécessaire de l'équilibre européen, se brisât et disparût pour le malheur de l'Europe." (Speech in the Senate, March 11th, 1903). An interesting collection of opinions on the development of Austria into a federal State, and the probable results on the Balkan Peninsula, will be found in the last chapter of the work of Dr. Aurel Popovici, *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Gross-Oesterreich* (Leipzig, 1906).

* See, for a summary of these views, an article by Sir C. Dilke in the *English Review* of October, 1909, p. 495; and Hansard for 1908, cxviii., 955-970; and for 1909, vol. viii., 621-635.

exactly the opposite of the result intended, and of thereby strengthening the consolidation of the Central Powers. The diplomatic admissions and confessions of Lord Salisbury, both before and at the time of the Berlin Congress of 1878, had, he thought, made it difficult for the Foreign Office to take any decided stand against the final annexation, which the existing position had been certain to cause sooner or later. Turkey and Servia both complained. He did not deny that the Turkish Revolution brought about by the so-called "Young Turks," who were the cause of the crisis in the Balkans, held out some possible prospect of a future less hopeless than the previous state of things; but this might have been conceded without expressing "unreserved approval of a military pronouncement attended by a good deal of hanging." Servia also, no doubt, might be said in some degree to represent democratic principles upon the banks of the Danube; but he thought it difficult to reconcile the expression before a rather cynical Europe—and in very strong language, too—of our official horror at the conduct of the Servians in the barbarous murder of their King and Queen, with our joining Russia so very soon afterwards in a support of Servia against Austria-Hungary too absolute even for French concurrence.

Lord Salisbury, he fully believed, had become acquainted in 1877, if not before, with the substance of an agreement between Russia and Austria which contemplated, amongst other things, the annexation by the latter of the Provinces; and it was perfectly clear, from what passed at the Berlin Congress, that in 1878, before the meeting, Lord Salisbury must himself have concluded an engagement with Austria-Hungary, though the word "annexation," no doubt, did not appear in it, and more general terms probably were used, but containing no reservation, and promising support to the Austrian policy in those Provinces. Technically the engagement might have lapsed with the treaty, and probably it had; but the fact remained, with its moral consequences. Mean-

while Lord Beaconsfield had taken Cyprus from Turkey, and had given a greater shock to Europe, by the form and the secrecy of the proceedings, than could possibly attach to the recent unilateral action of Austria-Hungary. During the proceedings at Berlin, it must also be remembered, Lord Salisbury had practically promised Tunis to France. Turkish sovereignty was technically, indeed, still maintained in Cyprus, as it also had been for thirty years in Bosnia and the Herzegovina,* and as it was at that time in the Sudan; but at no time did the Turks expect to see those territories again under their effective sovereignty. Insistence on the letter of the treaty also weakened our position in regard to Crete, where, as he had so frequently contended, nobody could wish or believe the position made by the treaty to be permanent. Lastly, he insisted that the policy into which we had been drawn by M. Isvolski had been damaging to our interests, not only because it had strengthened the ties between the members of the Triple Alliance, but because it assisted the popularity in Germany of a naval rivalry, which oppressed us with the cost of ever-increased armaments at sea.

Sir Edward Grey, he went on to say, had taken for his text the declaration of the London Conference of 1871 as to the denunciation by Russia, in 1870, of the Black Sea clauses of the treaty of 1856. But Russia got her way, and had practically been told she would get it on the main question before the Conference met. When in 1885 Eastern Roumelia was swallowed by Bulgaria, all the Great Powers theoretically protested, but nothing came of their remonstrance. In 1886 Russia broke the article of the treaty which related to the port of Batoum; and Lord Rosebery,

* See, on the whole subject, Hanotaux, *La France Contemporaine*, vol. iv., pp. 314, 363-370; *Études Diplomatiques: La Politique de l'Equilibre*, by the same author, p. 184. A secret clause was signed on July 13th, 1878, by the Austro-Hungarian Plenipotentiaries, in which the occupation was described as temporary and ordered to be the subject of a special arrangement with Turkey. The secret clause was really made to save the face of the Turkish Plenipotentiaries on their return to Constantinople.

no doubt, wrote a despatch based on the same doctrine as that now adopted by Sir Edward Grey. But Lord Rosebery at least avoided introducing new matters. His final despatch concluded with the words: "It must be for other Powers to judge how far they can acquiesce in this breach of an international engagement." Russia again succeeded. Why, then, have complicated the original issue in the present case by joining with Russia and France, at the instigation of the former, in putting forward suggestions to be considered at a European Conference for the territorial expansion of Servia, if possible to the Adriatic, and in regard to the Danube, that thorniest of diplomatic subjects ?*

"Our action," Dilke argued, "in such matters ought to be, as it generally is, to bring people together for public peace, and not to interfere with matters where our interfering in details is certain to be resented. Of course, there was more than this in the German resistance. That resistance was always, I think, certain. It was certain to be provoked by common action on the part of the three Powers in such matters, but it was doubly caused by the indiscreet language used, not by us, but by the Press, in support of the three Governments, and officially in Russia. We heard talk about Russia having at last completely joined two Western Powers in an anti-Austrian movement, and articles headed 'Revelations of a New Triple Alliance' were calculated to intensify opposition on the part of Austria and Germany.

"The net result has been a set-back, not so much for us as for our supposed and suspected client, Servia. Servia has had her position very much worsened by our interference on her behalf. It is unfortunate that small Provinces in the Balkans should be in this position, that when Powers who are not going to fight appear to take up their cause against neighbouring Powers, however natural and wise it may be in the abstract, the result is almost certain to be to make their position worse; and undoubtedly there has

* "L'indépendance des bouches du Danube est pour nous un dogme" were the words attributed to Count Andrassy in June, 1877 (Hanotaux, *La France Contemporaine*, iv. 315). See, too, the opinion of Radetzki, quoted by René Henry, *Questions d'Autriche-Hongrie*, p. 128.

been a set-back, caused by us and Russia, to Servia. We have not even with us our Mediterranean ally Italy, because Italy herself abstained from supporting us in this matter, as she was bound to abstain under her engagements. I therefore end this part of the matter by saying I think we have set the doctrine of the sacredness of the Treaty of Berlin, in the circumstances, too high. We have had two previous examples of the risk of setting up that doctrine, and pressing it too far, in such a case. We have tried to set it up on two previous occasions, and have failed. The second of those two occasions, in 1886, is very clear. There was a distinct violation of an article of the Treaty of Berlin, and of the protocol outside that article. Lord Rosebery wrote a strong despatch with regard to that violation, and he raised the same comparison of 1871 as we raised on this question, but nothing happened. That is a very long time ago, and the Treaty of Berlin has not become more sacrosanct since 1886 than it was at that time, which was more near its conclusion. My main point is, we have supported principles that we could not justifiably or wisely support. If we had had any political or European idea behind us, any idea of improving the conditions of peoples, or of giving greater liberty to the peoples, the country would have been more inclined to give support than it is on the mere bare doctrine of the sacredness of a treaty. On the last occasion when these matters were discussed, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs made a most brilliant speech on the Naval Vote of Censure. In that speech he defended what is very near the old doctrine of the balance of power in Europe. No one will take exception to his statement of the effect of the existing balance upon our position in Europe. The danger is now, as it was 100 years ago, and still more 120 or 130 years ago, that you may be tempted by these understandings, which are good, to convert them into something very near, but not quite, an alliance, and to pursue a policy in support of the balance of power which will keep you in permanent hot water all round with everybody, and will risk war."

How far the belief in the existence of a policy of encirclement, as the current phrase went, which existed in Germany from 1905 to 1909,* was justified is a matter

* See Hanotaux, *La Politique de l'Équilibre*, chap. xxiii.; Reventlow, 279, 296-305; Baron Beyens, *L'Allemagne avant la Guerre*, pp. 220-221.

which the historian of the future will have to discuss. Certain it is, however, that the British Foreign Office after 1909 gave no just cause of offence to Germany. The disappointing outcome of supporting Russia in the negotiations connected with Bosnia; the failure at this time of the Entente to produce any satisfactory results in Crete and in various negotiations at Constantinople, where French policy was deemed to be influenced by considerations more financial than political; the friendly reception of King Edward VII. at Berlin in February, 1909, and the great changes which death or retirement brought about, in the years immediately succeeding, in the personnel of the Ministries of Germany, France, Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Italy—amongst others the retirement of the German Chancellor—produced a new situation.*

In 1910 things seemed to point again to the possibility of clearer skies. The negotiations between Germany and Great Britain in regard to the Bagdad Railway and the still outstanding African questions were resumed, and proceeded without any serious hindrance. Favourable results seemed, and with good reason, to be in sight There were also negotiations between Germany and Russia. Thus it was that, a few days before he passed away, Sir Charles was justified in still writing in a hopeful strain that the Great War could and would be avoided—fortunate at least in this, that he did not live to see the breaking up of the foundations of the great deep.†

* Hanotaux, *La Politique de l'Équilibre*, chap. xviii.; Reventlow, p. 339. Prince von Bülow resigned on July 20th, 1909; M. Clemenceau on July 14th, 1909; M. Isvolski and M. Tittoni in October, 1910; and Count Aerenthal in February, 1912.

† In his recently published work, *England and Germany*, 1740-1914, Mr. Bernadotte Schmitt says, speaking of the beginning of the year 1911—prior, it is to be remembered, to the Agadir incident: "In the early summer of 1911, Anglo-German relations, if not cordial, had lost much of the animosity engendered by the Bosnian troubles of 1908 and the naval scare of 1909. The German Emperor had been well received when he attended the obsequies of his uncle, Edward VII., and again on the occasion of the unveiling of the national monument to Queen Victoria in May, 1911. On the 13th of March of the same year, Sir Edward Grey had remarked upon the friendly relations obtaining with all the Powers. . . . In Germany the

death of Edward VII., who passed for the inspirer of the *Einkreisungs Politik*, caused a feeling of relief." Speaking of the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the war, the same author observes: "Whatever Germany's motives may have been, the fact remained that in July, 1914, Anglo-German relations were more cordial than they had been at any time since the Boer War. . . . The tragedy of the Great War lies in the fact that early in the summer of 1914 a substantial agreement had been reached between Great Britain and Germany on those matters about which they had previously disagreed" (pp. 195, 373). This book, by an American Rhodes Scholar of the Western Reserve University, is a very valuable and impartial contribution to the history of recent events. On the condition of things in 1911 and 1912, see also the despatches of Count Lalaing and Baron Beyens, from London and Berlin, to M. Davignon, the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, published in the official German White book, *Belgische Actenstücke*, 1905-1914, pp. 85, 113.

CHAPTER LIX

THE LAST YEARS

I

Call no man happy or unhappy, said the philosopher, till you see his end. With Sir Charles Dilke's life clear before us, if the question be put, "Was he happy?" only one answer can be given. He was happy. With a power of suffering which made bereavement poignant, with tragic experience of disappointment and distress, he never lost the faculty of enjoyment: he touched the world at many points, and his contact was complete and vital.

Therefore, in the life that he lived after his second wife's death there was nothing gloomy or half-hearted. At Pyrford and Dockett the same interests continued to hold their charm, though in his home of homes, the home that he did not make, but was born into, there was a change. At 76, Sloane Street, he still slept, breakfasted, and did his morning's work; but he would never willingly return there for dinner, except on very rare occasions when he entertained guests, or spend the evening there.

He still enjoyed the life of the House of Commons. Old friends were a pleasure, new-comers a fresh spring of interest, and the younger men naturally drew round this most willing teacher. One of the young Liberals* who came within his influence describes the amazing interest of his talk, with its personal memories of the leading personalities in Europe during half a century past. But the true attraction was something simpler than that. "He made you extraordinarily fond of him."

* Mr. A. F. Whyte, M.P.

What is implied in that very simple phrase has been set out by another friend of an opposing political school, brought into touch with him by a common interest in Social Reform:*

"What first brought us together I forget; I think it was some action I took with regard to sweated trades. At any rate he asked me to stay for a Sunday at Dockett Eddy; and after my first visit I went often. For one thing, we were both devoted to rowing; he was, of course, a far more distinguished and accomplished oarsman than I, but he and I went extraordinarily well together in a pair. Everyone who has rowed knows that pair-oar rowing is the most difficult, as it is the most fascinating, form of the art. We had many long rows together.

"The life at Dockett Eddy had an atmosphere and a colour different from that of other houses. Breakfast was at a fairly early hour. After breakfast, Dilke was invisible till lunch. Lunch was at 12.30, French in character, and always, wet or fine, took place on the broad verandah which ran along one side of the house. During the afternoon Dilke rowed on the river, walked about the green and winding paths of his beloved willow-clad island, and talked to his friends. The prevailing recollection that I shall always have of Dockett Eddy is good talk. No one who did not talk to Dilke knew the man. His speeches—at any rate, from 1906 to his death—did not give all his qualities. These came out in his talk. His amazing knowledge, which occasionally overloaded his speeches and diverted them from their main argument, wove itself naturally into the texture of his talk and gave it a wonderful richness and depth. And he talked to everybody and on all subjects; and to all he brought his tremendous vitality and his vivid and many-sided personality. You always felt that the whole force of the man was behind what he said—the active, eager, questioning mind, determined to master all facts that gave true knowledge, and when this was done, when all facts were noted and weighed, coming to a conclusion which was both clear-cut and unalterable. He was most tolerant of the views of others, and never overwhelmed with greater knowledge; but all that he had in him he gave freely and without stint. The talks I recollect best are either on industrial conditions in other countries, or on French

* Mr. J. W. Hills, M.P.

history from 1848 onwards, or on English politics. On French history I always listened to him with delight; he not only knew literally every fact and every date, but he also knew personally most of the great men who had latterly played leading parts. On English politics it was characteristic of the man to have a tremendous belief in the present. For instance, I said something about the decadence of Parliament and Parliamentary speaking. He at once burst out: 'You are quite wrong. The men of to-day are much greater than their predecessors'; and then he went through all our prominent politicians and compared them with the men of the past. The only comparisons I remember are Winston Churchill with his father, and Asquith with Disraeli and Gladstone, in each instance to the advantage of the present generation.

Dilke was a great man, if ever there was one. He was a man of big ideas, too big for prejudice or suspicion or self-interest. His mind was at once imaginative and matter-of-fact, making him that rare combination, a practical idealist. But the abiding memory which I shall retain of him as long as I live is not his wide knowledge, his singleness of purpose, his vital energy and driving force, so much as the friendship he gave me. He put the whole of himself into his friendship, and gave himself abundantly and without reserve. He was so great a man, and meant so much to his friends, that he played a large part in the lives of all he honoured with his regard. Though I only knew him during the last three years, he filled so big a place in my life that his death left a wide and empty gap. I regarded him with love and veneration."

"He talked to everybody and on all subjects," and he talked to everybody on a common ground of fellowship. Newman, the cabdriver at Shepperton, beside whom he always insisted on sitting when he came to Dockett; Jim Haslett, his ferryman; Busby, his old gardener and lodge-keeper at Pyrford: these no less than "Bill" East who rowed with him, and "Fred" Macpherson with whom he fenced, keep the same memory of his friendliness and of the pleasure that they had in being with him. For his constituents he was more than a representative: he was their friend, a personal influence, a centre of affection in the lives of many among them. "I hardly know what to do or say,"

wrote one of them after his death. "For one man to say of another it seems strange, but I *loved* Sir Charles."

Into this affection there entered that peculiar tenderness of loyalty to the wronged which finds fit expression in these words of his old comrade, Judge Steavenson, who had known his life since they were young athletes together in the Trinity Hall boat: "I loved him, my oldest and best friend, and how I mourn him! The tragedy of his life has been pain and suffering to me for more years than I care to remember. Some say a little band of friends never wavered in their belief in his innocence. I am one, and so believing in good time I shall go to my grave."

Many a brave man has under the sense of injustice grown hard and bitter; it was not so with Sir Charles. After his death a friend's widow wrote to one who mourned him: "I should like to tell you how divinely kind he was to me in my great grief." A lady who for long years had been on a bed of pain said of his visits to her: "He seems to take your suffering from you and give it back to you on a higher plane. I think he understands because he has suffered so much himself."

In these last years after Lady Dilke's death, Sir Charles resumed, in some moderate degree, the old habit of travel. From 1906 it grew to be an institution that, when the Trade-Union Congress closed its sittings in autumn, he should meet the editor of this book and her friend Miss Constance Hinton Smith,* and with them proceed leisurely from the trysting-place to Dean Forest for his annual visit to the constituency. Thus in different years they set out from Tewkesbury, from Bath, from Leicester, from Ipswich, and explored towns and country places of beauty or historic interest, under the guidance of one who had the gift for placing every detail in its setting, whether on the physical map of England or on that crowded chart which depicts the long course of British history. For him these journeys were each a revisiting of places seen before—seen, as he

* Who attended these Congresses as visitors representing the Women's Trade-Union League.

would often recall, under his grandfather's guidance in boyhood.

The annual Christmas visit to Paris, where his son often joined him, was revived in company of his secretary, Mr. Hudson, and his wife. In more than one autumn, after his stay in the Forest of Dean was completed, he made a journey through Switzerland to the Italian lakes. He journeyed under a resolution not to visit any gallery of pictures, for these must recall too poignantly the companionship which had made the special joy of all his picture-seeing. But he sent his companions that they might compare their impressions with his memory, always astonishingly vivid and exact. The sights to which he gave himself were sun and air, mountain and lake. Here, as in England, trees especially appealed to him, and in the famous garden of the Isola Madre on Lago Maggiore he amazed the gardener by his acquaintance with all the collection, from the various kinds of cypress and cedar down to the least impressive shrub. But what gave him most pleasure was the actual journeying, awakening not only associations with the places seen, but memories of other places in far-off corners of the earth.

In the last year of his life the International Association for Labour Legislation met at Lugano, and he stopped there on his autumn tour. His health was already failing, he attended no meetings and received few visitors; but experts in the subject, Ministers and ex-Ministers of Labour from Prussia, France, Canada, and other countries, sought him, to consult him on points of international policy. Two years later, when the Congress met again at Zurich, M. Fontaine recalled the memory of Sir Charles and the " conseils précieux " which other workers drew from him in their interviews. It was only when the Congress was over that the holiday really began, with a day on Maggiore and two days on Orta, before the travellers made for their real destination, Aosta among its hills, a scene new to him as to them, that filled him with fresh life. All about it charmed him: the mountains, the Roman gateways, the mediæval cloisters, the

long procession of the cattle coming down from the hill-slopes during the night; the keen air gave him energy to walk as he had never thought to walk again; and, for a touch of familiar humours, the landlord of the rough little inn where they stayed had been in his day a waiter in Willis's Rooms and remembered his guest among the diners there.

An accident to one of his companions had caused him to go on alone, and, accordingly, when he came back to Turin to fetch them it was as a guide already fully qualified. On the drive up from Ivrea, in a valley whence can be seen at the same moment Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa, and the glacier of the Gran Paradiso, he could show them the fort of Bard, blocking the gorge just as in the days when it checked Napoleon on his road to Marengo. But the memories awakened in him were not only of Napoleon; the valley of the Dora Baltea was a complete image of the Khyber Pass, and Bard the very counterpart of Ali Musjid.

As they came home through France, halt was made at Lyons, and, though he refused to see the gallery, he could describe almost every canvas and the place where it hung; but best of all he remembered Charlet's great picture of the retreat from Moscow and the army that "dragged itself along like a wounded snake." In Paris, too, on that homeward journey a stop was made, and since few of his friends were yet back from the country, there was more theatre-going than usual. Guitry, his favourite actor, was not playing, but Brasseur and Ève la Vallière amused him, and he found special delight in the *Mariage de Mademoiselle Beulemans*. Yet not even the acting of Jaques as the good-natured, choleric old Belgian brewer could induce him to depart from his practice of going away after the first act.

Three times in the last years of his life he went back to Provence. The first of these visits was in the January of 1909, and he with his companions set out from Paris on the last day of the old year, travelling by motor-car in defiance of heavy snow and frost. These made obstacles which only gave piquancy to his journey through scenes where stories

of the Franco-German War crowded to his tongue, and when difficulties delayed the car he struck up wayside intimacies —once with an old non-commissioned officer now transformed into a *Garde Champêtre*, anon with a peasant couple from whose cottage he begged hot water to make tea. In one such household, arriving with beard and moustache frozen white, he announced himself to the children of the family group as Father Christmas, and made good his claim with distribution of little gifts.

At Hyères he was rejoined by the old servant, once his gardener and vine-dresser, who had marketed the produce of La Sainte Campagne in the days when Sir Charles was trading, like any other petty Provençal landowner, in grapes and artichokes, mimosa and roses and violets, for the Toulon market. That former life lived again in his talk as he recalled those whom he had known in his Provençal home: neighbours, servants, local politicians; and from his hotel at Hyères he never failed to make excursions to Toulon, and to visit his old friend and sometime man of business, M. Bertrand, who would carry him to the café frequented by the leading citizens, to feast on a Provençal déjeuner with red mullet and bouillabaisse. Another recurring visit was to Émile Ollivier at La Moutte, his beautiful seaward-facing house on the promontory beyond Saint Tropez.

" Sir Dilke " had friends everywhere in that corner of the world. His near neighbour at Cap Brun, M. Noël Blache, leader of the local bar, a famous teller of Provençal stories and declaimer of Provençal verse, said of him: " He knows our country and our legends better than we know them ourselves." In the years during which he lived for part of the twelvemonth at Toulon he had followed every winding of the coast, had explored all the recesses of the hills.

" It is my boast, probably vain," he wrote to M. André Chevrillon in 1909, " to have invented the Mountains of the Moors. Sizeranne had been staying there for six weeks before he came into the British Hyères, but, *he*, only on the coast. When I first showed that coast to Émile Ollivier, Noël Blache, then President of the Conseil-Général of the

Var, and Félix Martin, the latter advised the narrow-gauge railway which ruined the politicians of the Var, and became 'le Panama du Midi.' My journey this time was to assure myself that the road and railway along the coast had not spoilt the *interior*. They have improved indeed, and I was glad, a road from the entrance to the forest on the main road from Hyères to Cogolin, turning to the north over two cols to Collobrières. The T.C.F. has made a road from Collobrières up the hill to the south-east, whence the walk to La Chartreuse de la Verne is easy. I used to have to reach that spot from Campo, the police post on the stream, called Campeaux upon the maps. The whole forest is unharmed. It is unknown to the British inhabitants of Hyères. Not one had been there, or, I think, heard of it; and I met no human creature upon some twelve miles of the finest parts of the improved road. Grimaud, at the other end, I have no doubt you know. It was the Moorish capital. I went there the day that I lunched with Émile Ollivier this time. There was a foot of ice on the top, at La Garde-Freinet, and one looked back, down on to Grimaud, standing baked by an African sun, and could make out the ripe oranges and the heads of the great cactus."

"Why does not someone 'discover' France?" he writes to M. Joseph Reinach. "How few Frenchmen know the sunset view *north* from St. Tropez in January!" And again to M. Chevrillon in 1909: "I adore the solitude of Sainte Baume, and believe in Marie Madeleine—except her head and tomb at St. Maxime, where Brutus Bonaparte helped keep the inn.* Intellect is represented here by Robert de la Sizeranne, *but* it is only two and a half hours in motor or two and a half by rail to La Moutte, where I make É. Ollivier read his fourteenth volume!"

All the little hill towns were known to him, and their history; he could show the spot at Cavalaire where the Moorish lords of Provence trained their famous horses; he knew the path at Le Lavandou, worn into the solid rock

* The eldest of the Bonapartes was not the only person of the Napoleonic days as to whom stories were told in the neighbourhood. Désirée Clary was said to have lived at the inn of St. Maxime, and Sir Charles wrote to Mr. Morley concerning La Sainte Campagne: "My old cottage is supposed to be that where Murat was concealed after the 100 days."

by the bare feet of countless generations. It irked him that the plain of Fréjus was spoilt by the intrusion of white villas on what had once been called "a better Campagna." But these changes were of the surface only. Provence was still Provence, its people still unchanged from the days when Gambetta said to Sir Charles of one who projected a water-course at Nice: "Jamais il ne coulera par cette rivière au tant d'eau qu'il n'en dépensera de salive à en parler." There was still the local vintage in every inn, still the *beurre du berger*, the cheese and the conserves of fruit which every housewife in Provence sets out with pride in her own making; still the thin breeze of the mistral through the tree-tops, still the long white roads running between fields of violets and narcissi, and still white farmhouses among the terraced oliveyards and vines. All these things were an abiding joy, but a greater joy than all, and still more unchangeable, was the daily oncoming of light, the subtle flush and gradations of colour before the sun rose from that beloved sea.

II.

In the year 1908 Sir Charles's health had been very bad, and he risked his life in attending the annual miners' meeting at the Speech House, leaving Dockett Eddy, as his custom was, at six in the morning, and returning home the same night. But by the following year he had regained his physical condition and his cheerfulness. The aspect of politics, too, had been transfigured. Speaking to his constituents in September, 1909, he reminded them how a year earlier the Liberal party had been despondent.

'This year all of them felt that the Government, with the country behind it—for the country was thoroughly behind the Government in the matter of the Budget—had taken, not only a new lease of life, but had adopted an attitude which on the whole, apart from any little doubts in reference to particular details, commanded a confident and an enthusiastic support on the part of a wider majority of people than any other movement of modern times.'

He told them of his own objections to the famous Budget—one in regard to the cider duty, upon which he had carried his point, the other to the increased tax on tobacco, which he had unsuccessfully resisted. So long as tea and tobacco were taxed as they were, the working classes, in his judgment, paid more than their just proportion. Still, a great stride forward had been taken. As for the House of Lords throwing out the Budget, "those who did not like that Chamber wanted that fight, but it did not seem to him natural that the House of Lords would desire it, because it appeared to him to be a fight in which the Peers were perfectly certain to be beaten." Nevertheless it came to pass, a General Election followed, and the huge independent Liberal majority disappeared. Sir Charles was active to keep together the various sections which most desired to limit the power of the House of Lords, and on February 22nd, 1910, he, on behalf of the Radicals, held an interview with the Labour and Irish leaders together, to ascertain and discuss the line of action contemplated. Also, since there was a proposal that Government should, as a matter of urgency, oust private members and take all the time of the House, he saw Mr. J. S. Sandars, Mr. Balfour's chief private secretary, and in Sir Charles's phrase "factotum," to find out what the Opposition was going to do.

In the debates upon the Government's Resolutions which laid the foundation for the Parliament Act, Sir Charles took no part. The matter had gone as he desired.

By April the Resolutions were adopted; but before action by Bill could be begun, the Parliamentary struggle was suspended by the death of King Edward. In that national loss Sir Charles Dilke felt special sorrow. Whether as Prince of Wales or as King, the dead Sovereign had consistently shown him, not merely consideration, but friendship. It was among the satisfactions of Sir Charles's last years of life that the principle, for which he had incurred odium by contending forty years earlier, now came to be fully recognized as that most respectful to the Crown. Lord Knollys writes that on the accession of King Edward VII.,

Sir Charles had called and "offered to support any reasonable Civil List which might be proposed." A Civil List Committee was appointed, on which Sir Charles served, and the result of its deliberations was to recommend a discontinuance of occasional grants from Parliament to members of the Royal Family. It did not, indeed, go to the length of making adequate provision for the family and leaving its distribution to the King, which was what Sir Charles always recommended; but it moved far in that direction, and to that extent carried out his views.

The royal funeral brought to London another Sovereign with whom Sir Charles had friendly personal relations, and the last page in his Memoir tells of a 'long talk with King George of Greece at Buckingham Palace.' The King was inclined to deprecate the summoning of a National Assembly for that autumn. He called it "stupid," whereat, says Sir Charles, 'blank look on my part.' Then, after a pause ('whereas till then we had talked in a perpetual duet'), the King went on to admit that the National Assembly was his own creation.

"Well, I was against it at first because we can do by law already everything that is to be done by the National Assembly. But I saw that it was the only way out."

"I am glad, Sir," Sir Charles quickly rejoined, "that I was not 'stupid,' for I attributed the invention to" (and he pointed) "its author."

The King, however, was afraid that some might "blame him," and when Sir Charles answered, "No one," he quoted the phrase once applied to him: "Bon petit roi, manque d'énergie." The reply was: "I don't know who said that, Sir! Your prestige is exactly opposite to the German Emperor's prestige, but equally important to your country and to peace. It may have been a fool who said it, but it was probably chaff."

". . . My family?"

"Oh, well, that is chaff—that is what I meant by chaff."

But Sir Charles took occasion to tell a very important

member of the "family" that "Berlin and Athens were different."

When autumn came, the sitting of the Constitutional Conference silenced Sir Charles and all men who desired a fair field for that great experiment. Its failure precipitated a new General Election.

By this time there was no doubt in Sir Charles's mind as to the gravity of his physical condition. To a friend, who in October was setting out for extended travel in West Africa, he wrote these words in a letter wishing him God-speed:

"You are much more likely to come back alive than I am to be alive to welcome you. Yet I *hope* that the less likely survival *may* be, and of the other I feel pretty sure."

Knowing what he did of his own health, knowing the loyalty of his constituents, who had within a few months returned him by a majority of over two thousand, he might well have consented, as his friends wished, to fight the new election by deputy. It was not his way. Haggard and physically oppressed, he spent a fortnight in that bitter December going the round of meetings, addressing his supporters as best his bodily weakness allowed that strong will and fine courage to have their way. The result was foregone: his majority was triumphant; but the exertion killed him. None the less, he came out of the fray jubilant; his side had won, the victory had been decisive. In Paris, where he went with Mr. Hudson, the journalists came to him for his accustomed review of the total situation. "Depuis que je suis au Parlement, je n'ai pas connu un Ministère aussi solide que le Ministère présidé par M. Asquith," was his emphatic word to M. Leudet in the *Figaro*.

The strain had in no way impaired his intellectual vitality. Those of his old friends who saw him, such as M. Reinach, had never known him more animated. To M. André Chevrillon, a newer friend by whom he had been greatly attracted, he wrote:

"I see in the *Times* that you are writing on Russian literature and *music*. Please, then, include *Bell* music:

a saint's eve at Troitsa Sergeifski! The silver notes floating in the dusty—or the frozen—air. I've been there in September, and I've been there in December.

"Any chance of seeing you—without moving, for I'm suffering from weak heart, after two winter-contested elections in one year? I'm extraordinarily better to-day, but am apt to 'blow' in other than the Australian sense."

M. Chevrillon has written his impression of the gravity which lay behind that cheery tone.

"J'allai le voir à l'Hôtel St. James. Je n'oublierai jamais l'impression que m'a laissée cette visite. Il était d'une pâleur de marbre; il m'a dit brièvement qu'il se savait en danger immédiat, que le médecin l'avait averti; et tout de suite, quittant ce sujet, il m'a parlé avec son animation, sa verve et sa précision habituelle de la situation politique en Angleterre. Il y avait ce jour-là sur cette noble figure toute blême, une dignité, j'ose dire une majesté, extraordinaire; il était déjà marqué par la mort; il la regardait venir avec une tranquillité et un courage absolu; j'emportai de cette visite le douloureux sentiment que je ne le reverrais pas, et une admiration qui me restera toujours pour ce que je venais d'entrevoir de son caractère."

From Paris he insisted on moving South once more. He travelled now as an invalid; but when morning light came into the compartment where he lay, he made his way to the window and beheld again cypress and olive, sun-baked swarthy soil, little hills with rocky crests fantastically chiselled, all bathed in the dazzling sunshine of the South. Leaning his face against the window, he said: "Provence always plays up."

At Hyères he was kept in bed. But he still read the books that came to him by post, still dictated his reviews for the *Athenæum*, and still enjoyed the reading aloud of French plays, which had become a habit of holiday time. And, above all, from his window as he lay he watched with delight unjaded the spectacle of sea and sky. "Am I not a fortunate invalid," he said, "to have the most beautiful view in the world to look at?"

Now and then his shout of laughter would be heard

and the old spirit of fun would assert itself. When the journey home in January, 1911, had to be faced, he rallied for it, came to the restaurant on the train, and during the crossing sat on deck with Miss Constance Smith, who writes:

"At that time his thoughts seemed to stray from this last journey back to that which we had taken in the autumn. 'It is worth while,' he said, 'to have seen Aosta. I am glad to have done it. It is not often at my age that one can get so much pleasure out of a new thing.' I think he had a double motive in mentioning Aosta. He put it forward partly to obliterate for me the sadness of the past three weeks by raising the memory of the pleasant times that lay behind."

When he reached London he was happy to be again at home and he felt better. Those with him had no fear for the immediate future, and he himself fully expected to take his place in Parliament when it met. Friends would have induced him to consider what part of his work could be abandoned, but his answer was peremptory: "I won't be kept alive to do nothing." Confined to bed as he was, work still went on; he received and answered letters, read and annotated Blue-books. Curiously and almost dramatically, the occupations of these last days sifted themselves out in such fashion that the very latest things he handled became, in some sort, an epitome of his life's work. M. Michelidakis, President of the Cretan Executive Committee, had written to complain, on behalf of the Cretan people, that the last note of the Powers seemed to reverse their policy of slowly transferring Crete to a local government. On January 24th Sir Charles answered this appeal for his help. It was the last letter that he signed with his own hand—fit close to a lifelong championship.

Other clients were knocking at his door that same day, other voices from that strange retinue of petitioners who brought from all quarters of the world to this one man their cry for protection and redress. What they asked was no romantic action, nothing stirring or picturesque, but simply the weight of his authority exhibited on their side, and the

wisdom of his long practice in public life for their guidance. He was to fix a date for introducing a deputation concerning certain grievances of the coloured people in Jamaica, and was to advise upon the best way to raise a number of minor West African questions in the new Parliament. His answer was sent from 76, Sloane Street:

January 24th, 1911.

"I am still lying up, but I think that I could answer any ordinary call to duty, and I am trying a small private meeting to-morrow afternoon, though I shall return to bed here.

"I will note Thursday, 2nd, at noon, on the chance of being well enough.

"The questions which personally interest me the most are those affecting the concessionary companies, and I should be glad if you would ask Wedgwood to keep very close touch with me on these. He likes me, and is quite willing to show me things; but he does too much and, like myself, is always tired, and the result is that he has to be reminded as to consultation in advance, though he does not mind this being done.

"I doubt there being much danger about the Gambia. As for the Southern Nigerian ordinances, I am not competent, and have a general impression that as a rule we do best on more general lines, though some of the concessionary companies make such 'cases' as to form exceptions."

His strength was far spent. This letter, says Mr. Hudson, writing two days later to the President of the Aborigines' Protection Society, "he asked me to sign, after wishing to sign himself."

Yet the brain was clear and the will unshaken. The "small private meeting" of which he wrote was a committee of directors of the *Gardeners' Chronicle*, and on the 25th he was preparing to rise and dress to attend this, but was persuaded to go back to bed. In bed, he was still busy reading and marking Blue-books which bore upon the case of the unorganized workers. The papers so prepared were, by his direction, set aside for the service of the Women's Trade-Union League. They were delivered next morning, but the messenger who took them carried with them the tidings

of Sir Charles Dilke's death. He had slipped suddenly out of life, his heart failing, soon after four o'clock on the morning of Thursday, January 26th, 1911.

* * * * * * *

To the funeral service at Holy Trinity, Sloane Street, on January 30th, there came from the House of Commons members of the Cabinet and of the Ministry, representatives of Liberalism and Labour, the Irish leader with several of his colleagues, while from the Unionist benches also men paid this tribute to an honoured opponent. But the Parliamentary figure of most interest was Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who carried from a sick-room to the graveside the farewell of old comrade to old comrade.

Among the congregation were men who had been official representatives of great dominions of the Empire or of foreign Governments. These came in their private capacity, but one nation as a nation was represented there. The King of the Hellenes sent his Minister in London to be his deputy, and the Greek Government ordered a wreath, the token of their sorrow and gratitude, to be laid upon the bier.

Tributes poured in from the great mass of his fellow-countrymen; from philanthropic societies; from those who, in or out of Parliament, had worked with his help and guidance. But above all there were messages from every trade union and organization of wage-earners, letters from men and from women in every kind of employ, testifying of service done, of infinitely varied knowledge, of devotion that knew no limit, and that had not gone without the one reward acceptable to the man they honoured, their responsive love and gratitude.

So closed a life across which many commentators of the moment wrote, some lightly, some in sincere regret, the word Failure. It was ill-chosen. They should have written Loss. His career had not fulfilled the promise of its opening; his abilities had never found the full scope which once seemed assured to them; he had done for his country only what his country permitted him to do. Over this it was

natural, it was reasonable, to speak words of sorrow. Those who said—and there were not a few who said it—that he had accomplished more out of office than he could ever have achieved in office, paid a tribute to the greatness of his work, but they did not understand the force which had been wasted. He combined two gifts rarely found in combination—the gift of Parliamentary leadership and a profound knowledge of foreign affairs. Amongst the men of his time he stood out as essentially a House of Commons man, but he was also a European personality. In these characteristics he recalls Lord Palmerston. Whether to foreign or to domestic affairs, he brought a knowledge, a judgment, and a mastery of detail, which none of his contemporaries surpassed and few equalled; and he added to these the priceless gift of tact in dealing with men and with bodies of men. In the only Parliament which knew him as an administrator his advance was rapid and decisive: five years placed him by universal admission in the front rank; and yet the general opinion was not less clear than that of the few great ones. Beaconsfield and Bismarck singled him out by their special interest; Gladstone looked to him as probably his own ultimate successor.

Then came the day when there was taken from him for ever the opportunity of directing great affairs, and Sir Charles Dilke's career must be numbered among things that might have been. Yet was his "the failure"? "It was England's misfortune, and perhaps her fault," wrote one * who knew him intimately and shared but few of his political opinions, "that she could thus have been deprived of the services of one of her best statesmen."

All that he could do to repair the misfortune to his country was done without stint. Dismissed from his high command by a scandal, the truth of which he persistently denied, when a life of ease was open to him he chose, in spite of obloquy, to return to the ranks. Of what he accomplished in the ranks some outline has been given; its record stands as an answer to those who think, as many are tempted to

* Mr. Spenser Wilkinson.

think, that work in Parliament without office is, in these days, foredoomed to futility.

Yet not in the external results of his wisdom and his labour, but in another sphere, lies his supreme achievement. The same fate which obscured the statesman's greatness revealed, what prosperity must have hidden, the full measure of the man. To have requited public contumely with public service; in the midst of humiliation to have kept his nature unspoilt, unimbittered, every faculty bright and keen; to have abated no jot of his happiness; and at the last to have passed away in serene dignity, all the voices of reproach hushed and overawed—this was not defeat, but victory; this, complete in its fulfilment, was the triumph of Sir Charles Dilke's life.

CHAPTER LX

LITERARY WORK AND INTERESTS*

No view of Sir Charles Dilke's life can be complete which fails to take account of his literary interests and activities. He disclaimed the title of man of letters.† Except for the little memoir of his second wife, all the books he gave to the world, as well as the larger part of his periodical writing, were inspired by political, though not by party, considerations. And throughout the years of his public career the pressure of daily work inside and outside Parliament left him small leisure for reading other than that through which he kept himself acquainted with every movement, and as far as was humanly possible with every fact, that seemed to bear upon the wide range of subjects handled by him. So prodigious was his industry, however—only Dominie Sampson's adjective will serve—and so quick his faculty for detecting at a glance the quality of a book and extracting from it the pith and marrow, that even in the busiest periods of his life he contrived to keep abreast of the things best worth knowing, not only in English, but also in French literature. From the time when, by his father's death, he inherited the proprietorship of the *Athenæum*, he exercised, through that journal, a definite if indirect influence in the maintenance of the high standards of literary honesty, accuracy, and taste in which he had been brought up. This was done partly by means of his own contributions to the paper,

* By Miss Constance Hinton Smith.

† 'Except in editing some of my grandfather's papers, I never myself at all ventured into the paths of pure literature; but I have lived near enough to it and them . . . to be able to enjoy.'

which covered a field which included history, travel, art, poetry, and archæology in two languages, and partly through "his comments and suggestions on the proofs," of which Mr. C. A. Cook, a former acting editor, writes with abiding gratitude. Other newspaper proprietors have doubtless done as much to preserve uniformity of tone and principle; few, if any, have probably brought such close and unwearied care to bear upon those details in which tone is audible and principle expresses itself.

Sir Charles Dilke's attitude towards literature, like his attitude to politics and art, was peculiar to himself. He judged books, as he judged men, not by the conventional verdict of the world—in this case the world of critics—but by the quality his own mind discerned in them. His judgments, therefore, were personal judgments, uncoloured, as far as human judgments can be, by traditional respect or prejudice. This does not mean that he had no literary canons: his grandfather's pupil could hardly have left old Mr. Dilke's hands so unfurnished; but he never became the slave of a rule or the docile worshipper of any reputation, however well established. This mental freedom was partly due to intellectual courage. The humour of Lamb, for example, delights the majority of educated Englishmen: it had no charm for Sir Charles, and he was not afraid to say so. But his liberty of appreciation owed something also to the circumstances of his education. The fact that he had never been at a public school—thus missing, in the plastic years of a sensitive boyhood, the influences which make most strongly for conventionality of outlook among men of a certain class—made it easier for him than it might otherwise have been to examine literary questions with his own eyes, and not through the medium of special glasses imposed by authority. By the time he went up to Cambridge this habit of judging for himself was already formed; and although Cambridge did much to mould, she did not remake him.

The catalogue of his published writings, apart from those contributed to magazines and newspapers, is brief. It

consists practically of the early book that made him famous as a political thinker, *Greater Britain;* the brilliant satire, *Prince Florestan*, published anonymously in 1874, of which he subsequently acknowledged the authorship; and the few volumes written after the close of his official career, each of which deals with large questions of public and international interest. *Problems of Greater Britain* and *Imperial Defence* (the latter written in collaboration with Mr. Spenser Wilkinson) were the most important of these works, which do not represent fully the literary ambition of his earlier years. There is plenty of evidence in the Memoir to show that, at the time of that journey round the world of which *Greater Britain* was the result, he had not only formed, but had begun to carry out, several literary projects. Some of these, essays in verse, story-writing, and metaphysical speculation, belong to the category of experiment or amusement, and represent nothing more than the natural activity of a fertile mind trying its powers now in this direction, now in that. Others are more characteristic: a History of Radicalism, a Political Geography, a book to be called *The Anglo-Saxon Race* or *The English World*, and a work on *International Law.**

As late as 1878 he was 'working hard at' a *History of the Nineteenth Century* 'for three or four months' in Provence, 'besides managing to do some little work towards it when I was in London.' At this time he was engaged upon the History of Germany in the early part of his chosen period, and was corresponding with Professor Seeley as the highest authority on that subject.

'My history of events began with 1814. I showed that the doctrine of nationality had been made use of for their own purposes by the Kings in 1812-13, and crushed by them at congresses between 1814 and 1822, and then appealed to by the revolutionary party in 1823, and in a less degree in 1848. That doctrine of nationality was described even in our own times by Heine as a dead thing, when it was yet destined to prove, in 1859 and 1866 and

* See Chapter VI. (Vol. I., p. 62).

1870 and 1878, the phenomenon of the century, and nowhere to work such change as in Heine's own Germany. Heine thought that the idea of the emancipation of nationality had already in his day been replaced by the emancipation of humanity; but, whatever may be the case in the long-run, the emancipation of nationalities was destined to prove the more lasting side of the movement of 1848.'

After stating that the nineteenth century must be held to have begun in 1814, he writes:

'History to me was one and could know no commencements, yet in the development of a concerted action of the Powers I found 1814 so convenient a starting-point as to be as good as a real beginning. In the rise of the new society, the social revolution,'

he found himself less fortunate. There was no clear starting-point, and when he selected August 4th, 1789, as his,

'I felt that I chose only the moment of the springing of the plant from the soil . . . and stood in some danger of neglecting the previous germination of the seed beneath the soil.'

After delivering a lecture on "Old Chelsea," in which 'I made a considerable attempt to clear up some points in the life of Sir Thomas More, for whom I have a great admiration . . . I conceived . . . the idea of writing a Life of More, whose life has never been well told since it was written by his son-in-law at the time; but the immense difficulty of writing any Life which would stand a comparison with the son-in-law's notes ultimately deterred me.'

It is easy to understand why the foregoing projects were dropped; but why Sir Charles never published the book on Russia which he was known to have had in preparation is not so apparent. He had paid four protracted visits to the country, travelled over a great part of it, and was intimately acquainted with Russians of the most widely differing opinions. Obviously he would have enjoyed writing the book that he had planned. He had actually fixed the date of publication, when he found that Mr. Hepworth Dixon had come, almost at the same time, to a deci-

sion to write on his subject. On August 3rd, 1869, he wrote to Mr. Dixon:

"My dear Dixon,

"In reference to your request that in good feeling and friendship towards you I should defer the publication of my *Russia* from February 1st, 1870 (the date fixed with Macmillan), to a later period, I have carefully thought the matter over, and have decided to do as you wish. The only condition that I make is that you will write to me by return of post saying whether, if I fix January 1st, 1871, as my day, you will date your preface not later than February 1st, 1870, and issue your first edition not more than a week after that date."

Dixon wrote back on the same day:

"My dear Charles,

"I am more pleased at your resolution than words can say. It is more than right. It is friendly and noble."

'Mr. Dixon immediately went to Russia, where we met in the course of the autumn, and speedily published his *New Russia*, a remarkable book considering the haste with which it was prepared. After five visits to Russia, I handed over the whole of my notes to my brother, who spent two years at one time in that country, and who finished the book.'*

Sir Charles's contributions to the *Athenæum* began while he was still at Cambridge. His article of October 22nd, 1864,† was the first of a long series of reviews and notices, which continued unbrokenly till within a week of his death. It was natural that, as years went by, his knowledge and experience should be drawn upon for reviews of important political biographies, and of books on imperial and colonial questions or military history. But he did not confine himself entirely to such grave topics. The files of the *Athenæum* contain many columns from his hand dealing with the lighter matters of topography (especially in France), travel, and fiction. The fiction was mainly French, modern English novels commending themselves little to his liking,

* Only two chapters ever appeared—in magazines.

† See Chapter V. (Vol. I., p. 54).

though he was among the earliest and steadiest, if also among the more discriminating, admirers of Mr. Rudyard Kipling, and Robert Louis Stevenson's *Prince Otto* had a place with his favourite books. Another subject which attracted his pen was the local and legendary history of his beloved Provence. His intimate acquaintance with the beliefs and fancies of that region could be gathered from his slightest notice of an ephemeral book on the country, as readily as his store of political knowledge and familiarity with the events that made history in his time from an extended review of a volume of *L'Empire Libéral* or the life of a leading contemporary in the House of Commons. In neither case could his hand be hid.

In influencing the choice of contributors to his paper, he threw his weight always on the side of the man who had complete knowledge of his subject. No brilliancy of style could make up in his eyes for lack of precision in thought or inaccuracy in statement. Next in order he appeared to value in a reviewer a judicial quality of mind, as essential to a sane and balanced criticism. "He disapproved"—to quote Mr. C. A. Cook again—"of anything fanciful in expression or any display of sentiment;" but, so long as writers kept clear of these literary pitfalls, he let them go their own road of style, with ready appreciation for any freshness or liveliness they exhibited on the journey. Reviews of French books were a special object of care, and for the *Athenæum's* annual survey of French literature he bestirred himself to secure the best hand available. In a letter to M. Joseph Reinach, dated July, 1888, he gives a list of the distinguished men—including MM. About, De Pressensé, and Sarrazin—who had written this survey in past years, ending with a suggestion that M. Reinach himself might perhaps be willing to undertake the task.

In his writing, as in his speaking, his object was always either to place facts before his audience, or to develop a closely reasoned argument based upon the facts. He took no trouble to cultivate literary graces in this connection; rather he seemed to distrust them, as in his speeches

he distrusted and avoided appeals to the feelings of his hearers. But it would be a great mistake to infer from his own practice that he was insensible to beauty of form and style. The literature he cared for most, that which roused his enthusiasm and provoked the expression of emotion so rare with him in the later years of his life—the literature of France before the Renaissance, the poetry of Keats and Shelley, some of the lyrics of the Félibres—is of the kind in which content owes so much to beauty of form that it is impossible to conceive of the one without the other; and he certainly took quite as much delight in the sound as in the sense of his favourites. Even in those favourites he was quick to detect a flaw. His grandfather's introduction of him to the best in literature had not been wasted; and his own early reading had given him a touchstone of taste which he used freely as a standard, although it was powerless to obtain admission to his accepted company of men of letters for those who made no appeal to him individually. The Memoir shows that his self-training in literature (for the grandfather did no more than indicate the way) was carried out in youth; it was at Cambridge, while still an undergraduate, that he read Shakespeare 'for pleasure.' And this was true also of the great authors of his own time. The results of that reading remained with him through life.

The Memoir dwells little upon his literary interests, and contains few literary judgments. He himself gives the reason:

'They do not pretend to be critical memoirs. . . . I have known everyone worth knowing from 1850 to my death; but, as I knew the most distinguished of my own country in childhood or early manhood, my judgments have changed. I have either to give crude judgments from which I dissent, or later judgments which were not those of the time. I have omitted both. . . . I knew the great Victorian authors. Thackeray I loved: *Vanity Fair* delighted me, and *Esmond* was obviously a great work of art; the giant charmed me by his kindness to me as a boy. But Dickens was to me a sea-captain with a taste for melodrama, and the author

of *Pickwick*. It is only in old age that I have learnt that there was real beauty and charm in *David Copperfield*. So, too, Mill I worshipped; and Carlyle, though I knew him, I despised—perhaps too much. Mat. Arnold was to me, in his day and my day, only a society trifler, whereas now . . . after for years I have visited his tomb, I recognize him as a great writer of the age in which he lived.'

Here and there in the Memoir are glimpses of the world of literature with which he was often in touch. He discusses with Swinburne a much-disputed reference in Shelley's *Epipsychidion*. In 1872 Browning reads his *Red Cotton Nightcap Country* at 76, Sloane Street. There are admiring references to the work of George Eliot, and to Mrs. Lynn Linton—'perhaps the cleverest woman I know.' When he goes to the United States, we get his warmly drawn picture of the Boston group—Emerson, Agassiz, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Asa Gray, Longfellow, Lowell, Dr. Collyer, and Dr. Hedge.* Recording Stepniak's suggestion that Bismarck, Mazzini, and Oliver Wendell Holmes were the three greatest conversationalists of our times, 'I said that, having known all three, I agreed that they were remarkable, although I myself found Mazzini a little of the bore. Disraeli was sometimes very good, although sometimes singularly silent; but there were once two Russians that I put in the first rank—Herzen and Tourgénief.'

Questions relating to one literary personality alone receive full-length treatment in the Memoir. On any point that concerned Keats Sir Charles was always keenly interested. He may be said to have inherited the Keats tradition and the Keats devotion from his grandfather, and anyone connected with Keats found easy way to his sympathy and attention. It was his intervention which finally obtained for Keats's sister, Mme. Llanos, a regular Civil List pension in 1880. When the Lindon family sold to Mr. Buxton Forman Keats's letters to Miss Brawne, Mme. Llanos wrote 'from Madrid saying how greatly she was vexed that her brother's love-letters should have been

* See Chapter VI. (Vol. I., p. 60).

placed before the world,' and 'I had a good deal of correspondence with Lord Houghton over this matter. . . . [Lord Houghton] wrote:

'"My dear Dilke,

'"Since the *Athenæum* fixed my place in poetical literature between Rogers and Eliza Cook, I have naturally not read that journal, but I have been shown a capital flagellation of those unfilial wine-merchants.* I thought I had even gone too far in my elegant extracts—with which you furnished me. I have, alas! no poetical amours to be recorded, out of which my family can make anything handsome."'

The letter ends with an invitation to lunch and 'talk Keats.'

Sir Charles notes further:

'About this time (1878) Mr. Buxton Forman announced for publication the Keats Love-Letters, which I certainly thought I had in a vague way bought for the purpose of preventing publication. They had been long in my possession, but the son of Fanny Brawne had claimed them, and I, having no written agreement, had found it necessary to give them up—although what I had bought and paid for, unless it was the right to prevent publication, I do not know.'

About this time Mr. John Morley proffered a request that Sir Charles would write a monograph on Keats for his *English Men of Letters*. Lord Houghton thought that a "new view" from Sir Charles "would have great interest"; but he decided to decline the undertaking.

The Memoir records at length the course of a correspondence with Joseph Severn, on the subject of his portraits of Keats, about which the old man's memory, in his last days at Rome, had grown very hazy. He thought that the miniature from which the engraving for Mr. Buxton Forman's edition had been made was the original presented to Fanny Brawne, whereas it was the copy made for old Mr. Dilke from that original, which itself was afterwards 'bought

* Miss Brawne married Louis Lindon, a wine-merchant.

by my grandfather to prevent its being sold by auction.' There was also at Pyrford a copy in oils made for Mr. Moxon, which Sir Charles had obtained by exchange from Mr. Frederick Locker-Lampson.

'After completing my investigations as to the portraits, I placed them on record in a letter to my old friend Scharf, the Keeper of the National Portrait Gallery, who replied: "Thanks for your interesting note, which we will duly place upon record. The portrait which we have here is posthumous. Severn painted it in 1821, and we hold a very curious letter from him describing the circumstances under which he painted it." Here, therefore, is another undoubted Severn in addition to the three which I possess. But I know myself of at least one other.'

The gift of his collection of Keats relics to Hampstead has been elsewhere recorded. In deciding on Hampstead for its resting-place, he brought it within the circle of local associations with Keats himself, and with the grandfather who had been Keats's friend.*

Modern French authors interested him more than their English contemporaries. In the former case he found, perhaps, less declension from the standard of the giants of whom he had been an eager student in his early manhood, when he read "all Balzac," and recorded his admiration for the "dignity" of Mme. de Staël's *Germany*. Dumas he loved then and always, returning to him with ever new delight, and utilizing the rare periods of inaction imposed upon him at intervals by illness to read the whole of *The Three Musketeers* series 'through again—properly.' Where other writers who held sway over the mind of France during the nineteenth century were in question, his independence of taste came into play. Sainte-Beuve he could 'make nothing of.' For Chateaubriand he felt something like contempt: 'Equally feeble as a maker and a writer of history . . . the inventor of a drawing-room Christianity

* The Memoir records, in 1878, a visit paid with his great-uncle, William Dilke, to Wentworth Place, 'the little house at Hampstead in which for a time Mr. C. W. Dilke and his brother were Keats's next-door neighbours.'

without Christ;' but he recognized the high quality to be found in the early writings of Sénancour. In later days the revival of a Stendhal cult filled him with wondering amusement. To the best work of Renan his affections were always faithful: *Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse* was among his favourite volumes. Anatole France gave him exquisite pleasure, and it is hard to say whether he most enjoyed the wit, the irony, or the style of that great writer. He had his favourites, too, among the minor gods, and was always ready to introduce a new-comer to the charms of *François de Barbizanges* or the fun of Alfred Capus.

In French poetry his taste was eclectic. His feeling for Charles d'Orléans and his contemporaries barely stopped on this side idolatry; but the classics of the seventeenth century had no message for him, and Victor Hugo as a poet left him, for the most part, unmoved. Indeed, he asserted that all French verse between Ronsard and Verlaine was purely rhetorical, and without genuine poetic quality. But in some modern poets, he thought, the true spirit of French poetry had revived. Early he proclaimed the genius of Charles Guérin, whose claim to high place in his country's literature remained unrecognized till after his death; early, too, he hailed a new poetic star in François Porché. The star seemed to him later to wane in brilliancy, but the disappointment with which he read the poems of M. Porché's second period never weakened his admiring recollection of the splendour of the poet's Russian verses and the searching pathos of *Solitude au Loin*.

His familiarity with French literature, his hearty affection for it, his understanding of the national spirit by which it is informed and quickened, constituted one of the strongest ties which bound him in sympathy to his French friends. The literary forms which have had so much attraction for the best French minds both before and after 1789—the chronicle and the memoir—were precisely those to which his unfailing interest in human nature led him by choice. Paradin and Froissart were companions of whom he never grew tired; and it would be difficult to decide whether he

found more absorbing matter of entertainment in Sully or Mme. de Dino.

But if he read these authors for delight, he read them also as a serious student. On this point the testimony of one of the most learned men in contemporary France is clear. M. Salomon Reinach writes:*

"Talking with Sir Charles Dilke about Renaissance and modern history, I soon perceived that he had taken the trouble of going to the sources, and that he had read and knew many things of importance which a man of letters, and even a scholar, are apt to ignore. It was Sir Charles, to give only one instance, who revealed to me the value of Guillaume Paradin's *Histoire de Notre Temps* and *Chronique de Savoie*, which he admired to such a degree that he put the now forgotten author (the name of whom is not in the British Encyclopædia) on the same level as Guicciardini and the great historians of antiquity. I would like to know how he discovered Paradin, and if copies of his rare works were in his library. When I happened to get hold of Major Frye's manuscript, afterwards published by me (thanks to Sir Charles Dilke's recommendation) at Heinemann's, he was the first to appreciate its interest, and gave me much information about abbreviated names and other allusions which occur in that diary. He chanced to dine with me the very evening when I first had brought the manuscript to my house, and he remained till past one in the morning, picturesquely seated on the edge of a table, reading passages aloud and commenting upon them. He also knew many secret and unrecorded facts about recent French history; some of them have been given by him in unsigned articles of the *Athenæum*, in reviews of books relating to the Franco-German War. I hope he may have left some more detailed notes on that subject. I would have had the greatest pleasure in corresponding with him, and regret I did not do so; but his handwriting was as mysterious as his mind was clear, and I soon found that I could not make it out."

* In a letter addressed to the editor, and written in English.

CHAPTER LXI

TABLE TALK

After Lady Dilke's death, the Rev. W. and Mrs. Tuckwell, her brother-in-law and her elder sister, made their home with Sir Charles Dilke at Pyrford; and notes of his talk put together from memory and from diaries by the old scholar give a vivid impression of the statesman as seen in intimacy. Mr. Tuckwell says:

During the last five years of his life I breakfasted alone with Sir Charles whenever he was at Pyrford. It was his "softer hour," and showed him in a specially endearing light. Not only was he fresh from his night's rest, full, often, of matter interesting or amusing in his letters which he had just read, but the tête-à-tête brought out his finest social nature. In large companies, as we saw him at Dockett, he was occasionally insistent, iterative, expressing himself, to use a term of his own, with a "fierceness" corresponding to the strength of his convictions. With me at our breakfasts he was gentle, tolerant, what Sydney Smith called "amœbean," talking and listening alternately. I was told that before his death the two experiences to which he referred in anticipating a return to his Pyrford home were the forestry among his pines and the early breakfast table.

Much of his talk was, of course, Parliamentary, bearing on incidents or persons from the House. He often spoke of Harcourt, whom he dearly loved. When Harcourt's death was announced to a party at breakfast in Speech House, several in the company told anecdotes of the dead man or commented on his character. One lady spoke of him harshly. Sir Charles remained silent, but more than once during the meal his eyes filled with tears. He told me on another

occasion that "Lulu" promised to be a greater man than his father, just as Winston Churchill is a greater man than Randolph. Lulu resembles his father curiously in all things except in the paternal habit of swearing. Once, when an attempt by the Opposition to snatch a victory in a thin House had been foiled, Harcourt said savagely across the table: "So that d——d dirty trick has failed!" Hicks Beach sprang up to ask the Speaker if such language were Parliamentary. Speaker Gully was too discreet to have heard the words. Dilke remembered being in company with Harcourt and Mrs. Procter, amongst several more. As she left the room, Harcourt said: "There goes one of the three most charming women I ever knew; the other two"—a pause, during which the ladies present looked keenly expectant—"the other two are dead!"

He turned to talk of Dizzy, to whom he had first been introduced in his early days by Lady Lonsdale, the great man wishing to know him. He quoted some of Dizzy's sayings. Dizzy called Spencer Walpole and Russell Gurney "those two whited sepulchres of the House of Commons." Walpole, consequential and lugubrious, he spoke of as "the high-stepping hearse-horse of public life." Of deaf Mr. Thomasson, who, ear-trumpet in hand, was wont to place himself near every speaker, he said that "no man had ever so neglected his natural advantages."*

Of Gladstone Dilke rarely spoke, but used to describe the periodical entrance of Mrs. Gladstone into the meetings of the Cabinet with a large basin of tea for the old man.† Once he had to work out with his chief some very difficult question. As they sat absorbed, Hamilton, the private secretary, entered with an apologetic air to say that ——, a well-known journalist, had called, pressingly anxious to

* Sir Henry Lucy claims this quip as his own, fathered by him on Lord Sherbrooke.

† In the last years of Sir Charles's life, at a party given by Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Gladstone at Downing Street, he stopped in the room where Cabinet meetings used to be held, and pointed out to the editor of this book the door through which Mrs. Gladstone used to enter bearing the bowl of tea. For Sir Charles's recollections of Mr. Gladstone, see appendix at end of this chapter.

see the Prime Minister on an important subject. Without raising his head, Gladstone said: "Ask him what is his number in the lunatic asylum."

He told of a Cabinet in 1883 at which —— talked a great deal, "and I told Chamberlain that at the Political Economy Club, where I had been dining on the previous night, there was a closure of debate in the shape of the introduction of hot muffins, which I thought would be excellent for Cabinets." At this Cabinet Lord Granville said: "We all agree that —— is a bore, but I have never been able to make up my mind whether that is a drawback or a qualification so far as public service is concerned."

Asquith he looked upon as one of the greatest Parliamentarians he had known, much superior in that capacity to Gladstone. His allocution on the King's death was noble; still finer his introduction of the Veto Bill in December, 1909. "His speech was perfect: forcible in manner, statesmanlike in argument, felicitous in epithet and phrasing." Balfour on the same occasion was at his worst: "hampered by his former contrary declarations, trivial in reasoning, feeble in delivery." He was ill, and ought not to have come. I asked if Balfour's frequent inconsistencies and vacillations were due to carelessness. He said no, but to the necessity imposed upon him, not of proclaiming principles, but of keeping together a divergent party. I asked what other notable recent speeches he could recall. He said the Archbishop of Canterbury's* on the Congo scandal, in the House of Lords: "a marvellous performance, nothing said which should not have been said, everything said which required saying; the speech of a great statesman." Bishop —— followed him with a mere piece of missionary claptrap. In the Commons on the same occasion our charming friend Hugh Law distinguished himself, silencing some of his compatriots, the Irish Roman Catholics, whose line was to support Leopold because the Protestant missionaries abused him. Leopold II. Sir Charles called "the cleverest—and wickedest—man living." He broke off to speak of the

* Dr. Randall Davidson.

Archbishop, whom he met weekly at Grillion's, as a delightfully instructive talker, not only full, that is, of light agreeableness, but supporting the opinions he advances with convincing, cogent, logical force, yet never boring his hearers. As another powerful speech he instanced T. P. O'Connor on Sir R. Anderson's indiscretions, "most terribly crushing in its grim, ruthless exposition," Anderson sitting in the Gallery to hear it.

In his own great speech on Army Reform in April, 1907, Sir Charles said that Haldane was "all things to all men." His hearers perceived it to be a quotation (which in fact I had furnished), but no one localized it! An amusing misquotation was Arnold-Forster's in the same debate: he said that Haldane was like King David, who drilled his men by fifties in a cave. In March, 1909, Sir Charles told me sadly of Arnold-Forster's sudden death, which he had just learned. "With some defects of manner, he was very clever, writing and speaking well. As War Minister Balfour gave him no chance. His last speech in the House, a fortnight before his death, just preceded mine. 'I must speak,' he said to me, 'on those damned Special Reservists;' and speak he did for a good, well-sustained half-hour, going out as soon as he had finished." He had been with us at Dockett. He and Sir Charles sparred continually and amusingly, both equally aggressive, imperious, stentorian, iterative, each insistent on his own declamation and inattentive to his opponent's.

Sir Charles, while on this topic of oratory, went on to quote with much hilarity a speech by Lord —— in the Lords: "This Liberal Government injures friends no less than enemies. Look at me! I am a passive resister; I belong to the National Liberal Club; I have married my deceased wife's sister; and none of my children are vaccinated; yet they are meddling with my rights as a landlord." The Lords did not see the fun, the papers did not report it, but it is to be found in Hansard.

I asked Dilke how my old pupil, Sir Richard Jebb, comported himself in Parliament. He said: "Handsome, beauti-

fully groomed, with a slight stoop, slow delivery, speaking rarely and on subjects which he thoroughly understood, his phrasing perfect, manner engaging: a man reserved and shy, not seeking acquaintance, but, if sought, eminently agreeable." University members, he added, should come always in pairs: one to represent the high University ideal, embodied only in a very few; his colleague reflecting the mob of country parsons who by an absurd paradox elect to Parliament. Jebb was the ideal Cantab.; didactic, professorial, the Public Orator; seeming incomplete without a gown: but for his rare and apt appearances, he might have overdone the part.

He told a story of Major O'Gorman. A professed Roman Catholic, he was dining in the House one Friday on a devilled chicken, when his parish priest was announced. "Waiter," he said, "take away the devil, and show in the priest."

When Sir Charles first took office, he was cautioned by his colleague, Lord Tenterden, not to read the newspapers: "If you do, you will never distinguish between what you know and what you have just read."

He mentioned ——. I said that his elaborate manners and bridegroom dress marked him out as *natus convivio feminali*, meant by nature to be a guest at ladies' tea-tables. Dilke assented, adding that he was less bland to men than to women. "Tommy" Bowles said of him in the House: "The right honourable gentleman answers, or, rather, does not answer, my questions with the pomposity of a Belgravian butler refusing twopence to a beggar."

He spoke of the decadence in costume characteristic of the present day. I said that, according to Wraxall, we must go back for its beginnings to Charles Fox, who came down to the House in boots. I added that, when I first went up to Oxford, a frock-coat and tall hat were imperative in walking out; that a "cut-away" coat, as it was called, would have been "sconced" in Hall; that men even kept their boating-dresses at King's or Hall's, changing there; that a blazer in the High would have drawn a crowd. He said that till very lately—he was speaking in 1907—the custom of dress in Parliament had been equally rigid; that Lord Minto

had recently scandalized his peers by wearing a straw hat; that when, some years before, a member whose name I forget had taken the same liberty in the Commons, the Speaker sent for him, and begged that he would not repeat the offence.

In February, 1908, we talked of the Sweating Bill. Two years before, he said, it could command so little support that, having obtained for it the first private members' night, he withdrew it. Now it was accepted with enthusiasm, and the second reading passed without a division—the change, he added, entirely due to the Women's Trade-Union League.

He expressed satisfaction with the stiffening procedure rules of April, 1906, but added that they would make great Parliamentary orations impossible. I said: "All the better, we want business in the Commons; for oratory there are other occasions." He said how transient is the public interest in men and questions; the community is like a kitten playing with a cork: so soon as it is tempted off by something else, the cork becomes dead to it. He instanced Rosebery; the Aliens Act; Tariff Reform, in spite of Chamberlain's galvanizing efforts. Of Campbell-Bannerman, then alive and well, he said that all his work was done for him by his subordinates: "he had only to read novels, prepare jokes, look inscrutable and fatherly."

In July, 1909, he attended the memorial service for Lord Ripon at the Roman Catholic Cathedral. Knowing that the leading statesmen on both sides, Protestant to a man, would be present, the ecclesiastics made the show as fine as they could, bringing out all their properties. All the monks and priests in London attended; the Archbishop, in gorgeous attire, sat on a stool, with two boys behind holding up his train. The music was exquisite; Sir Charles had never heard anything so sweet as the warbling of the Requiem by the chorister boys. But the whole was palpably a show, the actors intent on their acting, never for a moment devotional; where changes in the service involved changes in position, they were prepared while the part before was

still unfinished, so that the stage might never be empty nor the transformations lag: the whole thing a Drury Lane pageant; while the richly decorated catafalque in the centre, on which the ceremonial supposed itself to converge, was empty—*sepulchri supervacuos honores*—the body being at Studley. Of Ripon himself, whom everyone loved, he spoke affectionately.

Of talks on miscellaneous topics I recall the following. We spoke of the Tilsit Secret Articles, revealed mysteriously to the English Government. Sir Charles thought the informant was a Russian officer, betraying it with or without the connivance of the Tsar. Evidence has since come out connecting the disclosure with a Mr. Mackenzie, who is supposed to have obtained the secret from General Benningsen. Or Canning may have learned it through the Russian Ambassador in England, who was his intimate friend, and strongly adverse to his master's French policy.* Sir Charles went on to say that in history lies find easier credit than truth. All the books have said and say that England refused to buy Delagoa Bay from Portugal. He always denied this alleged refusal; and now Lord Fitzmaurice has caused search to be made, and finds no confirmatory evidence. Again, he maintained in Paris, against all the experts, that Nigra engineered the Franco-Prussian War. His words were repeated to the Empress Eugénie, who said, "Yes, he is right: Nigra was a false friend."

He talked of the Japanese, whom he had known in England and lived with in Japan. . . . Their only religion is patriotism, and their prayers to the Emperor are formal merely, yet they are reckless of life and eager to die for Fatherland; indeed, so incapable of retreating before an enemy as sometimes seriously to damage strategic plans. Were they launched against the West, they would go through any European army.

He spoke of the durability of the Third French Republic. It will be unbroken while peace lasts. War may bring a

* See for a recent discussion of the evidence J. Holland Rose's *Life of Napoleon*, ii. 135-140.

temporary Dictatorship, but the republic will of necessity revive again. The immense majority of Frenchmen are opposed unalterably to a monarchy.

He quoted what was said to be Napoleon's only joke. In opening negotiations with the British Government, he found it to be demanded as a preliminary that, as matter of principle and without prejudice, he should formally recognize the Bourbon rights. "Most certainly," he said, "if, also as matter of principle and without prejudice, the British Government would formally recognize the Stuart rights."

Dilke spoke of the old Political Economy Club, to which he was introduced by John Stuart Mill. The President was Lord Bramwell; its dominant member William Newmarch, a rough man of powerful intellect, of whose ferocious criticisms everyone stood in awe, and who was habitually hard on Mill.

He told a story of a well-known dandy, now a peer. The talk turned on "Society" in the second intention of the word. —— had enumerated certain houses in which you must be at home if pretending to the exclusive social set. It was objected that the inmates of some amongst these houses were persons whom the Queen (Victoria) would not receive. "The Queen!" said —— in a tone of pained surprise—"the Queen was *never* in Society."

I had been to church unwittingly on "Empire Day," and reported a sermon stuffed with militarism. He poured cold water on the idea. "Ireland won't have it; Canada won't have it; South Africa loathes it; India has an Empire Day of its own. Only Australia cares for it. It is a vulgar piece of Tory bluff, and a device for annoying the Dutch."

He had lately visited Dropmore: said how frequently the Dropmore Papers upset accepted history, but that the historian will answer, *Mon siége est fait.* He explained the phrase. A man had written a history of some famous siege; after it was published fresh facts were brought to his notice: he declined them—"Mon siége est fait."*

* Ascribed to the Abbé Dubois.

He talked of Marlborough's victories: he hummed the opening verse of "Malbrook s'en va-t-en guerre." I said it was our "For he's a jolly good fellow": he said yes, but the tune goes back to the time of the Crusaders. I asked who wrote the words. He said an unknown French soldier on the night of Malplaquet, when Marlborough was believed to have been killed. Napoleon, who knew no music, often mounted his horse at the opening of a campaign singing the first line as he put his foot into the stirrup.

He spoke often of Grillion's, which he habitually frequented and much enjoyed. He told of its formation in 1812; of old members whom he had known—Sir Robert Inglis, Chenery of the *Times*, regal old Sir Thomas Acland, Fazakerley, Gally Knight, Wilmot Horton; of its effect in socially harmonizing men bitterly opposed in politics. He told the story of "Mr. G." dining there by accident alone, and entering himself in the club book as having drunk a bottle of sherry and a bottle of champagne. He said what care was taken to exclude undesirables, preserving thereby a high tone of company and of talk. I asked him what was the finest conversation to which he had ever listened. "In Boston," he said; "at Lowell's breakfast-table; the company Lowell, Wendell Holmes, Longfellow, Agassiz, Asa Gray."*

We talked of precious stones, recalling the Koh-i-noor in its small gas-lighted tent at the 1851 Exhibition. He said that modern paste is more beautiful and effective than diamonds. The finest pearls known belonged to the Duchess of Edinburgh: she showed Sir Charles a collar valued at two millions sterling. I named the Hope jewels, shown also in 1851. He knew the "rich Hope," Henry, who built the house in Piccadilly. The "poor Hope," Beresford, had only £30,000 a year. They were a Dutch family, "Hoop" by name. Beresford's wife, Lady Mildred, aped the Queen, driving in the Park dressed in black, with a large hat, and finely mounted outriders. The same thing was done by Mme. Van de Weyer. Beresford bought the *Morning*

* See Vol. I., Chapter VI., p. 60.

Chronicle in order to promulgate his High Church views, writing under the signature D.C.L. He ruined the paper.

He more than once sang the praises of Sir George Grey—honoured in South Africa, Australia, New Zealand; statesman, aristocrat, Radical, creator of the Australian Labour Party, terror of our Colonial Office at home; one of the few men who have done great things by themselves. Bismarck told Sir Charles that Cavour, Crispi, Kruger, were greater than himself. "I had the army and the State behind me; these men had nothing." Amongst Bismarck's minor desires was a hope that he might outlive his physician, Dr. Schweininger, who plagued him with limitations as to diet. "To-day potatoes will we eat; to-morrow comes Schweininger." He owned to having over-eaten himself once, and only once: "Nine nine-eyes (lampreys) did I eat." "People," he said, "look on me as a monarchist. Were it all to come over again, I would be republican and democrat: the rule of kings is the rule of women; the bad women are bad, the good are worse."

Sir Charles spoke of Botha, whom he met here in 1907. People were unexpectedly charmed with him: they anticipated a replica of old Kruger; instead of that they beheld a handsome man, with the most beautiful eyes and mouth ever seen. His daughter with him was very pretty; fashionably dressed, in the style of a French American.

He told of an Indian official under the old East India Company stationed in a remote place, a "Boggley Wallah," who for several years sent in no reports, money, or accounts. An emissary, commissioned to bring him to book, found him living in great luxury on the borders of a lake. He said that he did his work and kept his papers on an island in the lake, and sent a boat for them; but the returning boat somehow sank in mid-water, and books and papers went to the bottom. The Company dismissed him without a pension: he came to London, took his seat daily in ragged clothes just outside the offices in Leadenhall Street, standing up to salaam when any Director or official passed in or out, but

speaking no word. People gathered to look at him, and at last the Company gave him £1,000 a year. He drove down in a carriage and four, and handed in a letter stating that he had already amassed £5,000 a year in their service, that they had now raised it to £6,000, and that he desired to express his gratitude.

I quoted from some book I was reading a dictum that no woman nowadays can be called perfectly beautiful. He said he had known only two, Lady Dudley and Madame Castiglione. The latter was in the pay successively of Victor Emanuel and Louis Napoleon; in the second capacity supposed to have been a spy employed by Cavour.

He spoke of John Forster, biographer of Dickens, an intimate friend of his own grandfather and father, as a man of violent, noisy passions, but very lovable; his attitude towards Dickens pathetically affectionate.

He described two German Princesses whom he had met at lunch; dowdy and of the ordinary Teutonic type, looking on their brother "Billy" as the greatest of mortals. They had been shopping up and down Oxford Street, delighted with their purchases, and with their escape from Court ceremonial. He went on to say how common every Prussian officer looks when in plain clothes. Wearing them very rarely, the officers never look at ease in them; and the swagger which they adopt in uniform is highly ridiculous in mufti.

When Napoleon's death was known, one of George IV.'s Ministers went to his master with the news: "Sir, your greatest enemy is dead." "Good G—! they told me she was better," was the royal answer. Sir Charles spoke of Jérôme Bonaparte, whom he knew; a dull man, a thorn in the side of Napoleon III. "You have nothing of the great Napoleon about you," Jérôme said one day. "I have his family," answered the worried Emperor. From him we passed to the death of the Duc d'Enghien. The Princes were notoriously plotting against Napoleon's life; by slaying a Prince of the blood he made it clear that two could play the game. The first copy of Mme. de Rémusat's book was

thought to deal too plainly with this and other topics; it was destroyed, and rewritten in a softer tone.

In November, 1909, Sir Charles spent some days in the Record Office, coming back each time in much need of a bath, after rummaging amongst papers which had not been disturbed for a century. He found amongst other papers a letter from a Grand Duke of Modena to Castlereagh, written just after Napoleon's fall, saying how exultant were his subjects at his return to them, and asking Castlereagh to lend him £14. With the letter was the draft of Castlereagh's answer, congratulating the Duke's subjects and himself, but adding that there would be difficulty in applying to Parliament for the loan.

Sir Charles remarked on my *Athenæum* review of Francis Newman's Life. He said that when he himself was in bad odour for his early Civil List speeches, so that he had been exposed to serious disturbances, and a break-up of his intended meeting at Bristol was threatened, Newman, from sheer dislike to mob tyranny, came forward to take the chair; and through a tempest of shouts and rushes, and amid the stifling smell of burnt Cayenne pepper, sat in lean dignity, looking curiously out of place, but serene in vindication of a principle.*

The publication of the Life of Goldwin Smith led us to talk of University reform. I said how by means of it my own college had become *ex humili potens*, had arisen from depths to heights, from obscurity to fame. Of his, he said, the contrary was true: his college had been ruined by Parliamentary interference. Trinity Hall was founded for the study and teaching of jurisprudence, the old Roman canon and civil law, on which all modern law is based. It was the only institution of the kind, a magnificent and useful monopoly. This exclusive character was destroyed by Parliament; scholarships in mathematics and classics were instituted; it is now like other colleges, and men who wish to study law at its source no longer frequent it. He talked to me of

* See Vol. I., Chapter IX., p. 141.

Cambridge, and related with mimicry anecdotes of "Ben" Latham, Master of Trinity Hall. Dining at Trinity Hall one Sunday in 1883, he said Latham told him that he had lately been sitting on an inter-University committee with Jowett, and that Jowett was so sharp a man of business that "it is like sitting to represent the Great Northern against the London and North-Western. His one idea is to draw away passengers from the rival line." Latham went on to say that the students for India who were made to stay two years at Cambridge or Oxford, under Jowett's scheme, "the first year learn *Sandford and Merton* in Tamil, translated by a missionary; and the second year *Sandford and Merton* in Telugu, translated by the same missionary. Thus they acquire a liberal education."

He talked of Waterloo, the battlefield being known to us both. It was, he said, as the Duke always owned, a wonderfully near thing. If Napoleon had had with him the two army corps left in France to overawe insurrectionary districts, who would have joined him in a week; and if at Ligny he had persevered in so smashing the Prussians as to leave them powerless—if these two "if's" had become realities, Napoleon must have driven Wellington back on Brussels. Then the Belgians would have joined him, and the Austrians would have forsaken the Allies, Metternich wishing well to Bonaparte for the sake of his wife and child. The mystery of his escape from Elba, which the English fleet might easily have prevented, remains still to be explained: for the Vienna Congress was riddled with intrigue.*

He made me laugh at a parson who in moments of provocation used to say "Assouan!" His friends at last remembered that at Assouan was the biggest dam in the world.

He gave me a recipe for beefsteak pudding: *no beef*, fresh kidney, fresh mushrooms, fresh oysters, great stress laid on the epithet: serve the pudding in its basin.

* Sir Charles Dilke discussed the whole question of Napoleon's escape from Elba in an article in the *Quarterly Review*, January, 1910, entitled "Before and After the Descent from Elba."

He came in to breakfast one morning whistling an attractive air. I asked what it was; he said from *Carmen*, and hummed the air through. He went on to say that he had well known the composer, Bizet, who founded his opera on Mérimée's romance. It fell flat, and Bizet died believing it a failure; afterwards it became the rage.

This whistling of music was a favourite practice with him. His accurate ear enabled him to reproduce any tune which had at any time impressed him. He would give Chinese airs, would go through parts of a Greek Church service, would sing words and music of the *Dies Iræ*. On the Sunday following the death of Florence Nightingale our Chertsey organist played Chopin's Funeral March. Sir Charles said its *motifs* were Greek rustic popular airs, each of which he hummed, showing how Chopin had worked them in.

The dinner given to him in April, 1910, in connection with the Trade Boards Bill was a great success, and much delighted him. He said Bishop Gore had made a splendid speech. Sir Charles had a long chat with Gore, and was, as always, delighted with his information and bonhomie.

He talked of a Parisian jeweller who lived by selling jewels and by lending money to the great Indian native potentates, and had establishments for that purpose in India. This man wished to be employed by our Government as a spy: Sir Charles applied on his behalf to Lord George Hamilton, who handed to him the man's *dossier*, an appalling catalogue of crimes and misdemeanours. He had an extraordinarily noble presence; Sir Charles said to him: "*You* ought to be Amir of Afghanistan." "No," he replied; "I should never have the patience to kill a sufficient number of people."

Of a French gentleman who had come to tea, recommended by the French Ambassador, Sir Charles said that he was a French fool, the worst kind of fool, *corruptio optimi*.

He showed the number of peerages having their origin in illegitimacy, although the official books conceal the fact where possible. The facts come out in such memoirs

as Lady Dorothy Nevill's. He went on to talk of divorce in the Roman Church, and to scout their boast that with them marriage is an indissoluble sacrament. The Prince of Monaco was for years the husband of Lady Mary Hamilton. They tired of each other, wished for a divorce; the Pope, with heavy fees for the transaction, declared the marriage to have been for some ecclesiastical reason null and void. Each married again; but the son of the nominally annulled union succeeded his father as legitimate heir.

Sir Charles spoke—this was in 1906—of Bülow's speech in the German Parliament, as one of the best ever made by any statesman, and creating universal astonishment. Its appreciation of France and of Gambetta was magnificent as well as generous. The French, after the *débâcle*, behaved as a nation self-respecting and patriotic ought to have behaved. His hint at the bad feeling between the Kaiser and King Edward was dexterous; it was real and insuperable; none of our Royal Family can forgive the seizure of Hanover by Prussia; and added to this was our King's indignation at the Kaiser's treatment of the Empress Frederick, a member of his family for whom he felt strong affection.

Of Morny he said that he was very handsome, but in an inferior style. His beautiful Russian wife never cared for him, but in obedience to Russian custom cut off her wonderful hair to be laid with him in his coffin.

He spoke of the brothers Chorley, one the supreme musical critic of his time, the other a profound Spanish scholar, shut up through life in his library of 7,300 volumes.

Dilke told me one morning that he had been writing since five o'clock an article for the *United Service Gazette*, and had finished it to his satisfaction, adding that papers dashed off under an impulse were always the best. I demurred. "Those papers of mine," I said, "specially praised by you have been always the fruit of long labour." "Ah!" he answered, "but you have style—a rare accomplishment; that is what I have admired in yours." "Would you," I said, "admire the style if the matter were ill considered?" "Yes."

He often talked admiringly of the Provençal language, declaiming more than once what he called a fine Homeric specimen:

> "Pesto, liona, sablas, famino, dardai fou,
> Avie tout affronta."
>
> (Pestilence, lions, sandy deserts, famine, maddening sun-heat,
> Ye have all this faced.)

He was fond, too, of quoting Akbar's inscription on the Agra bridge: "Said Jesus, on whom be peace, Life is a bridge: pass over!"

He described the French Foreign Legion: two regiments employed by the French chiefly among the natives in the Tonquin settlement—desperate men most of them, many of high social position and of army rank, who had "done something" and had gone wrong; disgraced, hiding from society, criminals escaped from justice, with a sprinkling of young adventurers and riotous Germans. No enormity they would not commit, no danger they would not court; some even seeking death; all knowing that if left wounded in the bush by retreating comrades they would be tortured horribly by the Tonquin women. They had a hospital served by Roman Catholic nurses, to whom they paid every respect. When a man newly joined once whistled rudely while the Sister was praying, as was her custom before leaving the ward, his comrades severely punished him. Intra-regimental offences, such as theft, were visited with death.

He mentioned one morning that he had just received a Privy Council summons. I asked why the Bidding Prayer held a petition for the Lords *and others* of Her Majesty's Privy Council: old Regius Professor Jacobson used to tell us that it was a mistake, that all Privy Councillors were "Lords" of the Privy Council. He thought that the word "others" represented the Lord Mayor, who attends Accession Councils and signs the parchment, but, not being a Lord of Council, is then required to leave, while other business proceeds.

Twice in these years he dined at Oxford—once at All Souls as the guest of Mr. Spenser Wilkinson, again on the

invitation of some undergraduates, sons mostly of his political acquaintances. He greatly enjoyed both; the young men were the pick and flower of Oxford; the All Souls high table was full of young teachers and professors. What a change from the aristocratic college of my time, whose head was Lewis Sneyd, its Fellows William Bathurst, Henry Legge, Sir Charles Vaughan, Augustus Barrington, etc.! Anson very charmingly presided; the talk was everything except political.

He was extraordinarily impressed by the funeral of the King—a wonderful and novel ceremony he called it. As a senior Privy Councillor he had an excellent place with Asquith close to the coffin. The most magnificent figure in the show was Garter King-of-Arms, but all the heralds were splendid. The Archbishop, with the Dean of Westminster and a cross-bearer, was the only prominent ecclesiastic, the Bishops in their places as peers being crowded out of sight. The colouring was most effective, black setting off the scarlet. The singing was somewhat drowned by the Guards' bands, but the Dead March came in grandly through the windows from Palace Yard. He mentioned a curious fact: that Westminster Hall is controlled, not by Parliament, not by any Government department, but by the Great Chamberlain. It is the sole remaining part of the royal palace, which was lent to Parliament by our early Kings. I said that it had not witnessed such a scene since, on Mary's accession, the Sovereign and the two Houses met there to receive Papal absolution from the Legate Pole. He wished I had told him so before.

He recalled the Cambridge Union debates of his time: the best he ever heard was on a personal question, the impeachment of a man named Harris for some breach of rule. Henry Sidgwick was in the chair, the speaking extraordinarily animated and well sustained. The finest orator of his time was a man called Payne.* I said our best

* Payne belonged to the same college as Dilke, Trinity Hall, and was bracketed Senior in the Law Tripos of 1868. He had begun to make his mark both at the Bar and in the Press, when, still a very young man, he was killed in a mountaineering accident in Wales.

speaker in my day was Goschen; his Union reports caused Gladstone to pick him out and bring him forward. He said yes, but that Goschen never fulfilled his promise until his really powerful speech on Free Trade in 1903.

He enumerated the Jewish types in England. There is (1) the sallow Jew with a beak; (2) the same without a beak; (3) the "hammy" Jew, with pink face like a *cochon-à-lait*. The Florentine type, with fair hair and beautiful clear face, is not seen in England.

His criticism of a certain lady led me to ask who, of people he had known, possessed the most perfect manners. He said Lord Clarendon, who had the old carefully cultivated Whig manners, yet with the faintest possible tendency to pomposity. This style became unfashionable, and was succeeded by what he called the "early Christian" or "Apostolic" manners, of which the late Lord Knutsford was a perfect exemplar. The best-mannered woman he had known was the late Lady Waterford. Domestic servants too, he said, have manners; he instanced as magnificent specimens Turner, Lady Waldegrave's groom of the chambers, and Miss Alice Rothschild's Jelf. Lady Lonsdale once spoke of the latter as "Guelph, or whatever member of the Royal Family it is that waits on Alice."

Sir Charles talked about the Wallace Collection. Sir Richard was not the natural son either of the fourth Lord Hertford, or of his father the third Lord, Thackeray's Steyne and Disraeli's Monmouth. He was brought up by the fourth Lord Hertford, under the name of Monsieur Richard, not by any means as the expectant heir; yet, excepting the settled estates, which went to the fifth Marquis, all was left to him. Part of the great art collection remained at Bagatelle, which became the property of a younger Wallace, an officer in the French army; the rest has come to the English nation through Lady Wallace, to whom her husband left the whole. Why Sir Richard assumed the name Wallace no one knows. He was French, not English, speaking English imperfectly: a kind, cheery, polished gentleman.

Apropos of the Education Bill: old Lady Wilde from her window in Oakley Street heard a woman bewailing herself in the street—her son had been "took away," to gaol that is. "He was a good boy till the Eddication came along;" then, kneeling down on the pavement and joining her hands, she prayed solemnly "God damn Eddication."

Sir Charles contrasted the idiosyncrasies of some politicians: Grey reserved, Balfour telling everything to everybody; Arnold-Forster closely "buttoned up," Gorst dangerously frank. On Gorst he enlarged: a nominal Tory, in fact a Radical, ever battering his own side for the mere fun of the operation; old in years, young in activity of brain and body; a poor man all his life.

He said that the two incomparable sights which this country could show to a foreigner were (1) Henley in regatta week; (2) the Park on a fine summer day: everyone out riding, and the Life Guards' band going down to a Drawing-room.

I asked if he had heard a certain London preacher who was drawing large audiences. He said yes, and that he was well worth hearing. "He is High Church and anti-ritualist, Socialist and aristocrat, orthodox while holding every heresy extant, not cultured or literary, slovenly and almost coarse; yet grasping his listeners by the feeling impressed on each that the preacher knows and is describing his (the hearer's) experiences, troubles, hopes, life-history."

I questioned him about Leonard Montefiore, a memoir of whom had caught my eye in one of the bookcases. He was a man of brilliant promise, unpopular at Balliol, giving himself intellectual airs; went unwashed, with greenish complexion and generally repulsive appearance; would have been prominent had he lived; was much petted by Ruskin.

He said that, if London were destroyed to-morrow, in ten years' time its site would be covered with a forest of maple, sycamore, robinia, showing an undergrowth of Persian willow-herb.

He told of a man whom his groom pronounced to be "the

footiest gent on a 'oss and the 'ossiest gent on foot as he ever see."

He spoke of the "Local Veto Bill," forced by Harcourt on a reluctant Cabinet; Harcourt was, he said, a genuine convert to the principle—a curious intellectual phenomenon, this development of a belated conviction in a mind hitherto essentially opportunist. It cost him his seat later on.

Sir Charles described Speaker Peel's farewell to the House: said that it was quite perfect in every way. He thought Gully undesirable as his successor, and should not vote for him.

Of the rising I.L.P. he said once, in early days, they had done wrongly in formulating a programme. Their name was a sufficient programme; now they would indirectly help the Tories.

He had an extraordinary insight into the mental habits and emotions of domestic animals, interpreting the feelings and opinions of his horses when out riding, of his Pyrford dog Fafner, of his Sloane Street cat Calino, in a manner at once graphic and convincing. His love for cats amounted to a passion; a menagerie of eight or ten tailless white or ginger Persians was kept in an enclosure, at Pyrford. Once, when exploring a fine Ravenna church, we missed him, returning from our round to find him near the door, caressing a cat belonging to the custodian, which he had inveigled into his lap.

His literary dislikes and preferences were numerous and frankly expressed, deeply interesting as the idiosyncrasies of a rich and highly trained intelligence, even when to myself somewhat unaccountable. While keenly appreciating the best in modern French literature, he could see no charm in Corneille or Racine. Quite lately Rabelais, reopened after many years, appealed to him strongly, as keen satire and invective veiled by wit, and, so only, tolerated by those scourged. To be laid hold of and temporarily possessed by a book was as characteristic of him as of old Gladstone; in their turn, *Pantagruel*, Anatole France's *Penguins*, most of all *The Blue Bird*, which he read

delightedly, but would not see acted, formed of late the breakfast equipage as certainly as the eggs and toast: any utterance of conventional apology or regret was expressed by, "Voulez-vous que j'embrasse le chat?"

His acquaintance with English literature was intermittent. He was apparently a stranger to our eighteenth-century authors, both in poetry and prose; of those who followed them in time, he undervalued Scott, disliked Macaulay, admired Napier, admired Trollope. Wordsworth he condemned as puerile, inheriting the *Edinburgh Review* estimate of his poetry, and often called on me ecstatically to repeat Hartley Coleridge's parody of *Lucy*. Of Keats he was immeasurably fond, drawn to him by the poet's relation to his family, declaiming his lines often—as he did sometimes those of Shelley, whose verses in his own copy of the poems are heavily and with wise selection scored—in tones which showed a capacity for deep poetic feeling. A quotation would accidentally arrest him, and he would call for the book, usually after short perusal discarding the author as a "poopstick," a favourite phrase with him. I remember this occurring with the *Rejected Addresses*, though he knew and loved James Smith. A travesty of Omar Khayyám, called *The Rubaiyat of a Persian Kitten*, he read delightedly, much preferring it to the original. He professed contempt for the study of English grammar, more especially for the scientific analysis of English sentence-structure, which plays so large a part in modern education. The contempt was certainly, as Osborne Gordon said, not bred of familiarity. I fear that, like most University or public school men, he would have been foiled by the simplest Preliminary Grammar Paper of a University Local Examination to-day.

But his knowledge of political history, foreign and domestic, during the last centuries was marvellously extensive and minute. In earlier history he was oblivious often of his own previous knowledge, argumentatively maintaining untenable propositions. Though fortified by Freeman and Bryce, I could never get him to admit that all the historic "Emperors,"

from Augustus Cæsar in 27 B.C. down to Francis, King of Germany, who gave up the Empire in A.D. 1806, were Emperors, not of Germany or Austria, but of Rome; or that the Reformed English Church of Tudor times, with all its servility, had never relinquished, but steadily held and holds, its claim to continuous Catholicity. But a query as to the French Revolution, the Napoleonic dynasties, the Vienna Congress, the South African or Franco-Prussian War, or the developments in India, Canada, Egypt, would draw forth a stream of marshalled lucid information, which it was indeed a privilege to hear.

"Neque ille in luce modo atque in oculis civium magnus, sed intus domique præstantior. Qui sermo! quæ præcepta! quanta notitia antiquitatis! quæ scientia juris! Omnia memoria tenebat, non domestica solum, sed etiam externa bella. Cujus sermone ita tunc cupide tenebar, quasi jam divinarem, id quod evenit, illo exstincto fore unde discerem neminem" (Cicero, *De Senectute*).

APPENDIX

Personal Recollections of Mr. Gladstone by Sir Charles Dilke

The difficulty in the way of furnishing reminiscences of Mr. Gladstone in Cabinet is in part the Privy Council oath, but still more the fact that, where the matters that would be touched are of interest, they often affect individuals or parties. I saw the most of Mr. Gladstone between 1880 and 1886, and to this period the restrictions imposed by the considerations named are most highly applicable. In the earlier days when I sat in Parliament with him, from 1868 to 1880, we were, though sitting on the same side of the House, frequently opposed to one another, for I was often fighting for the claims of independent Radicalism as against his commanding personality. This was especially the case from 1868 to 1874; and his retirement after his defeat in 1874, when Lord Hartington became the leader of the Liberal party, was so complete that it was not until Mr. Gladstone was aroused by the development of the Eastern Question in 1877 that we again saw much of him in the House of Commons. An interesting reminiscence of the great struggle of 1878 is afforded by the copy in my possession of the Whips' list of the Liberal party marked by Mr. Gladstone and myself. I was acting for him, against the party Whips, in the preparations for the division upon his famous Resolutions. We daily went through the promises of the members who had undertaken to support his Resolutions, of those who remained steadfast in adhesion to Lord Hartington and who were prepared to vote against the Resolutions, and of those who would vote neither way. The changes from day to day in the ascertained opinions of the party were most strange. Family was divided against family—for instance the family of Cavendish—and the cleavage followed no line that corresponded with shades of Liberalism. The pro-Turks upon the Liberal side were joined in their support of Lord Hartington by the "peace at any price" section of the Radicals. Curiously enough, the division of the party was exactly equal, and remained equal through all the changes of individual promises. On the day on which peace was made, and (to Mr. Gladstone's immense relief) the chances of a complete disruption averted, the number of members pledged to Mr. Gladstone was 110, and an exactly equal number of members was pledged to Lord Hartington and the Whips.

Coming to later times, a reminiscence is one of April, 1893, when Mr. Gladstone sent for me to discuss a motion of which I had given notice upon the Egyptian occupation. He talked on that occasion with that absolute frankness which accompanied the confidence he always placed in others. It was not peculiar to him, but belongs more, perhaps, to the old days in which he received the training of his mind than to present times. We are told that democratic diplomacy is to be outspoken. But, so far as Parliament is concerned, the older leaders were, I think, like Mr. Gladstone, more given to outspokenness than the newer men, who find themselves forced by the ubiquity of the Press to a greater reserve than was formerly necessary to be maintained. Mr. Gladstone was always of a playful mind, and it would be impossible ever to fully relate any of his conversations without recalling the manner in which, however absorbed in his subject, he always would break off to discuss some amusing triviality. Sir William Harcourt has touchingly recalled Mr. Gladstone's old-world courtesy, which was in private life his distinguishing characteristic.—*Daily News*, May 24*th*, 1898.

INDEX

Abdurrahman, Amir of Afghanistan, candidate for the throne, i, 321; on the delimitation of the frontiers, 532; interview with Lord Dufferin, ii, 115, 116
Abercorn, Mary A., 2nd Duchess of, i, 520
Abercorn, James, 2nd Duke of, i, 520
Abinger, Lila L., 5th Lady, at Dockett, ii, 317
Aborigines Protection Society, i, 102; ii, 371; meeting, ii, 376
About, Edmond, i, 290; ii, 540
Abraham, William ("Mabon"), ii, 279, 281
Acapulco, i, 102
Acland, Mr., i, 15
Acland, Sir Thomas, member of Grillion's, ii, 555
Acton, John, 1st Baron, i, 266; criticism on Gladstone, ii, 62. Letters of, extract from, i, 491
Adam, Mme., i, 226
Adam, Rt. Hon. W. P., Chief Whip, i, 186; member of the Liberal Central Association, 233, 311 *note*; on the General Election of 1880, 296
Adams, Sir Francis, Chargé d'Affaires in Paris, i, 395
Adderley, Charles. *See* Norton, 2nd Baron
Adlerberg, Count, at Eastwell, ii, 26
Adriatic, naval demonstration in the, i, 330
Adult Suffrage, ii, 147
Aehrenthal, Count, ii, 515 *note*
Afghanistan, war with England, i, 261; Abdurrahman a candidate for the throne, 321; evacuation of Kandahar by the English, 385; delimitation of the frontier, 429, 430, 532; ii, 87-89, 114, 121; advance of Russia, i, 531
Africa, East Coast of, ii, 83
Africa, South, ii, 86; result of the mission of 1875, i, 271; war, 366; ii, 430-436, 496; condition, i, 530; native labour question, ii, 373; Union Bill, 374
Africa, West Coast of, ii, 81, 84; result of the policy of procrastination, i, 535; Conference at Berlin, ii, 85
Agassiz, L. J. R., i, 60; ii, 542, 555
Agricultural Gazette, i, 7
Agricultural Holdings Bill, i, 518, 524
Agriculture, Ministry of, i, 507 *note*
Airlie, David, 7th Earl of, likeness to Sir G. Campbell, i, 289
Akbar, inscription at Agra, ii, 562
Aksakof, J., i, 119
Aksakof, K., influence over Alexander III., i, 118
Albania, proposals for union with Greece, i, 328; for autonomy, ii, 250
Albany, H.R.H. Prince Leopold, Duke of, proposed grant on his marriage, i, 422, 424; at Windsor, 511; Claremont, 518; wish to be appointed Governor of Canada, 523; or of Victoria, ii, 26; death, 26; provision for his children, 27
Albany, H.R.H. Duchess of, at Windsor, i, 511
Albert, H.R.H. Prince Consort, Exhibition of 1851, i, 7, 10; gift to Sir Wentworth Dilke, 10
Alcester, Lord. *See* Seymour, Admiral
Aldershot, ii, 406
Alençon, Duchesse d', death, ii, 336
Alexander II., Emperor of Russia, attempt on his life, i, 103; character, 116; murdered, 379 *note*, 386, 414
Alexander III., Emperor of Russia, character, i, 116
Alexandra, Queen, i, 392; at Paris, 403; story of the Shah, 487
Alexandria, riots, i, 446, 459; bombardment, 448, 467; assessment of damages, 463, 465; British forces at, 555; claims for losses, ii, 46
Alfonso II., King of Spain, i, 189

Alford, Lady Marian, i, 545 *note*
Algeciras Conference, ii, 382 *note*, 505
Algeria, i, 183
Aliens, destitute, ii, 286, 347
Allen, J. H., Vice-President of the Camb. Union Society, i, 51 *note*
Allotments Extension Bill, i, 192
Alsace, Comte d', ii, 298
Alsace-Lorraine, result of the annexation, ii, 245
Amadeo I., enters Madrid, i, 189 *note*; abdication, 189 *note*
Amazon Valley, ii, 379
America, impressions of, in 1866, i, 66
American Independent, ii, 504
Amiens, i, 19
Ampthill, Odo, 1st Baron, i, 228, 292; on Lord Derby's policy, 206 *note*; despatch, 323; German views on, 342; Ambassador at Berlin, 413, 461; on Bismarck's policy of colonization, ii, 81
Anderson, George, i, 83, 166
Anderson, Mary, ii, 78
Anderson, Mrs. W. C. *See* Macarthur, Mary
Anglesey, Minnie, Marchioness of, i, 190
Anglo-French agreement of 1904, ii, 500, 506
Anglo-German treaty, ii, 498
Anglo-Japanese treaty, ii, 498, 503, 506
Anglo-Portuguese treaty of 1884, ii, 85 *note*
Anglo-Russian agreement, ii, 506
Anglo-Saxon Race, ii, 537
Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1878, i, 326
Angra Pequena, territory of, ii, 81
Annual Register, 1878, i, 258
Anson, Major Hon. A., i, 125
Antas, Miguel d', on reduction of the wine duties, i, 351
Anti-Slavery Society, protest against the employment of Zebehr, i, 556; ii, 42
Anti-Sweating League, National, ii, 361
Antibes, ii, 94
Aosta, ii, 521, 530
Arabi Pasha, mutiny, i, 451; appointed Minister for War, 456; withdrawal demanded, 458; reinstated, 459; trial, 549; internment, 550
Arch, Joseph, i, 152
Ardagh, Sir John, ii, 451
Argyll, George, 8th Duke of, views on coercion of Turkey, i, 216; at Strawberry Hill, 240; interest in Eastern Question, 288; Privy Seal, 306; disapproval of Irish Land Bill, 369
Argyll, John, 9th Duke of. *See* Lorne
Armenia, administration, i, 327; massacres, ii, 491
Armies, Indian, amalgamation, ii, 285
Arms Act, i, 365, 367
Army, British, reform, i, 77, 136; ii, 89, 387-399, 404, 414, 423, 428, 444; proposed increase, i, 136; ii, 427; manœuvres, i, 137; abolition of purchase, 137; flogging in, 293, 297; expenditure, ii, 395, 405; force, 395, 405; Continental system, 396; universal compulsory service, 396; proposed creation of a General Staff, 405; unpreparedness for war, 406
Army Estimates, ii, 420, 422, 428, 430, 437
Arnaud, Joseph, story of, i, 335 *note*
Arnold, Matthew, ii, 542; supposed author of *Prince Florestan*, i, 177
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hon. H. O., friendship with Sir C. Dilke, ii, 289; joint letter on National Defence, 417-419, 451-457; Navy Estimates, 438; Secretary of State for War, 441; on cost of navy, 442; letter of sympathy, 463; misquotation, 550; death, 550; reserve, 565
Arrears of Rent Bill, i, 447
Art in France in the Eighteenth Century, ii, 228
Art in the Modern State, ii, 227
Ashbourne, Edward, 1st Baron, i, 487; ii, 150
Ashburnham, Bertram, 5th Earl of, his collection, i, 527
Ashley, Evelyn, i, 241; Secretary to Board of Trade, 492; Under-Secretary of Colonies, ii, 153 *note*; at Classiebawn, 153 *note*
Ashley, Professor W. J., on Ricardian theory, i, 88
Ashton, Thomas, ii, 282, 350 *note*
Asia, Central, Committee, ii, 87, 115
Askwith, Sir George, at Guildhall, ii, 361
Asquith, Rt. Hon. H. H., ii, 328 *note*; intellectual power, 287; on Taff Vale judgment, 344, 365; Chancellor of Exchequer, 466 *note*; character of his speeches, 549
Aston, riots at, i, 473
Aston Clinton, i, 285, 302
Asylum, right of, views on, i, 387

Athenæum, i, 4; ii, 535; first article by Sir Charles Dilke in, i, 54; ii, 539; last articles in, ii, 529
Athens, ii, 293; War Ministry formed at, i, 241
Athletics for Politicians, ii, 316
Atlas, floating hospital, ii, 23
Augusta, Empress of Germany, i, 225, 228
Aumale, Duc d', i, 199, 265, 414; ii, 299, 336; death, 336
Aunay, Count d', i, 538, 553
Austin, Alfred, ii, 157
Australia, tour in, i, 62
Austria, Crown Prince Rudolph, in London, i, 250 *note*
Austria, Emperor of, at Paris, i, 103
Austria, Empress of, in London, i, 266
Austria-Hungary, annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, i, 327; ii, 249, 251, 510; supports Greece, i, 332; alliance with Germany, ii, 245; foreign policy, 248, 249, 251, 509; relations with Roumania, 251; Triple Alliance, 477
Avebury, Lord. *See* Lubbock
Ayrton, Rt. Hon. A. S., First Commissioner of Public Works, Parks Bill, i, 166 *note*; loses seat, 171; at Strawberry Hill, 240
Ayub Khan, victory at Maiwand, i, 336; meets Sir F. Roberts, ii, 296
Azof, Sea of, i, 91

Baden, Hereditary Duke of, in London, i, 292
Bagdad Railway, ii, 515
Bailloud, General, ii, 297, 298
Baker Pasha, Valentine, head of Egyptian Gendarmerie, i, 545; ordered to Suakim, ii, 28; defeated at El Teb, 28
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J., i, 268, 489; style of conversation, 283; at Industrial Remuneration Conference, ii, 21; appointed President of Local Government Board, 148; leader of House of Commons, 310; on Congo atrocities, 381; correspondence with Sir C. Dilke on Imperial Defence, 451-454, 456; Defence Committee of Cabinet, 419, 422; appointed First Lord of the Treasury, 423; on organization of the Admiralty, 440; Prime Minister, 441; President of Defence Committee, 441; fall of his Ministry, 464; opinion of House of Commons, 471 *note*; on Sir C. Dilke's knowledge of foreign affairs, 484; criticism on his speeches, 549; frankness, 565
Balfour, J. B., Lord Advocate (afterwards Baron Kinross), defence of Sir C. Dilke, ii, 166
Balkan States, i, 204
Ballantine, Serjeant, i, 143 *note*
Ballot Bill, i, 98, 421; in Committee, 135; working of the, 192
Bankruptcy Bill, i, 503
Bapaume, battle at, i, 122
Baring, Lady Emma, i, 253
Baring, Sir Evelyn. *See* Cromer
Barnes, Rt. Hon. George, M.P., ii, 343 *note*
Barrère, Camille, chief private secretary to Gambetta, i, 299, 380; on Egyptian finance, ii, 56
Barrington, Augustus, ii, 563
Barrington, George, 7th Viscount, i, 229; congratulations to Sir C. Dilke, 495
Barry, Maltman, i, 386
Bartlett, Sir Ellis Ashmead, i, 453
Basing, George, 1st Baron. *See* Sclater-Booth
Batak, massacres at, i, 207
Batanga, bombardment of, i, 356
Bateman, Bishop, founder of Trinity Hall, i, 197
Bathurst, William, ii, 563
Battenberg, Prince Alexander of, kidnapped, ii, 246
Battersea, Lord and Lady. *See* Flower
Baty, Dr. T., *War: Its Conduct and Legal Results*, ii, 259 *note*
Baudin, J. B. A. V., death and burial, i, 155
Bauer, Dr. Stephen, ii, 308, 357
Bavaria, Louis II., King of, at Paris, i, 103
Baxter, Rt. Hon. W. E., Secretary to Treasury, i, 140; Commissioner of treaty of commerce between France and England, 393
Bazaine, Marshal, appearance at the court-martial, i, 158
Bazley, Sir Thomas, i, 276; support of Lord Hartington, 223
Beach, Sir M. Hicks (1st Earl St. Aldwyn), i, 136; interviews with Lord Hartington, ii, 71, 72; meetings on Redistribution Bill, 124; opposition to increase of taxation on beer, 144; Chancellor of Exchequer, 427
Beaconsfield, Benjamin, Earl of, i, 179; on Black Sea Treaty, 121; refuses to accept office, 165; opinion

of Sir C. Dilke, 168; letter from, 184; opinion of *Papers of a Critic*, 184; on Cowen's manner of speaking, 196; refuses to join in the Berlin memorandum, 205; peerage conferred, 210 *note*; withdrawal from House of Commons, 211; proposed Mediterranean League, 249; at Berlin Congress, 263; prophecies for Sir C. Dilke, 270; opinion of the King of Greece, 329; *Endymion*, 410; meetings with Sir C. Dilke, 410, 411; ii, 548; illness, i, 411; statue of, 511; foreign policy, ii, 512; style of his conversation, 542; sayings of, 548
Beal, James, on Committee of London Government scheme, i, 421
Beatrice, Princess, her marriage and the Civil List, ii, 119
Beauchamp, Frederick, 6th Earl, ii, 355
Bechuanaland, annexation of, ii, 86
Beck, E. A., i, 28
Bedford, Hastings, 9th Duke of, style of conversation, i, 283
Bedford, George, 10th Duke of, supporter of Lord Hartington, i, 224
Beer, increase of taxation on, ii, 118, 144
Beetles, specimens of, ii, 325
Belgium, neutrality, ii, 256, 393; fortification of towns, 259; Congo administration, 381; Colonial Law, 383; relations with Great Britain, 384; *Belgische Actenstücke*, 516 *note*
Bell, A. S., at Dockett, ii, 318
Bellamy, Dr. James, i, 200
Benedetti, M., interview with King of Prussia at Ems, i, 486 *note*
Bénédez, Léonce, Curator of Luxembourg, ii, 501 *note*
Bentinck, George C., i, 98, 150, 198
Bérard, V., *La Révolte de l'Asie*, ii, 498 *note*
Berber, fall of, ii, 60; railway, 110, 112, 114
Berchtold, Count, on Albanian autonomy, ii, 250 *note*
Beresford, Charles, 1st Baron, i, 463; ii, 404 *note*; on cost of navy, ii, 429; organization of Admiralty, 439
Berezowski, attempt on life of Alexander II., i, 103
Berlin, Congress, i, 254, 263; ii, 511; Treaty of, i, 298, 322, 383; ii, 245, 250 *note*, 514; West African Conference at, ii, 85
Bernadotte, Marshal Jean Baptiste, i, 20
Bernhardt, Sarah, i, 414
Bernstorff, Count Albrecht von, i, 104
Berry, Sir Graham, Agent-General of Victoria, i, 280; at Chelsea, 280
Bertrand, M., of Toulon, ii, 523
Beust, Count, i, 250 *note*; difficulties over entertaining Empress of Austria, 266
Beyens, Baron, *L'Allemagne avant la Guerre*, ii, 507 *note*, 514 *note*
Bickmore, Rev. William F., Vicar of Kenilworth, i, 13
Biddulph, Lady Elizabeth, i, 288
Biggar, Joseph G., i, 224, 348
Billot, General, i, 300, 406; ii, 297; Minister of War, i, 523
Birmingham, meetings at, i, 144, 164, 186; celebration at, 525
Birrell, Rt. Hon. A., member of Cabinet, ii, 467 *note*
Bismarck, Count Herbert von, in London, i, 432; ii, 307; story of, i, 432; at Marlborough House, 520; on Angra Pequena, ii, 81; on dismissing Ministers, 99; at Sloane Street, 242; letters to Sir C. Dilke, 303, 307
Bismarck, Prince, i, 103, 107; responsibility for Franco-German War 1870, i, 133, 157, 485, 486 *note*; ii, 306; conversations with Sir C. Dilke, i, 189; dislike of Empress Augusta, 228; at Berlin Congress, 264; foreign policy, 323; ii, 160, 245-247, 309, 490; "reinsurance" Treaty, i, 379 *note*; story of, 405; relations with Crown Prince, 432; negotiations for alliance with Spain, 529; with England, 529 *note*; colonial policy, 534; ii, 81, 82; workman's insurance scheme, i, 542; ii, 80; on control of Egypt, i, 549; policy against England, ii, 47; criticism on, 99; receives Sir C. Dilke, 303-306; his dogs, 304; simplicity of his life, 304; food and drink, 305; visit to London, 306; resignation, 307; opinion of Sir C. Dilke, 308; sayings of, 556
Bismarck Archipelago, annexation of, ii, 82
Bizet, A. C. L., the composer, ii, 560
Blache, Noël, ii, 523
Black, C. E. D., secretary to Sir W. Harcourt, i, 323
Black Sea, neutrality of, i, 115, 212; ii, 512
Blake, Sir Henry, case of, i, 505
Blake, Thomas, ii, 279, 327
Blake, William, pictures, ii, 235
Blanc, Baron, Italian Ambassador at

Constantinople, on the refusal of Italy to intervene in Egypt, i, 471, 477-480
Blanc, Charles, i, 153
Blanc, Louis, i, 17, 55; at Paris, 110, 112
Blanqui, J. A., i, 111
Bloemfontein, Conference at, ii, 430
Blue Bird, The, ii, 566
Blunt, Wilfrid, i, 452, 470; telegram to Arabi, 460
Boat race, Grand Challenge, i, 38, 45
Bodley, J. E. C., secretary to Sir C. Dilke, i, 359, 504; secretary to Housing Commission, ii, 16; *Cardinal Manning and Other Essays*, 17 *note*; at Sloane Street, 241
Boer War, ii, 430-436, 496, 499
Boisdeffre, General, ii, 297
Boissier, Gaston, ii, 332
Bolan Pass, ii, 294
Bolton, meeting at, i, 143; riot, 143
Bonaparte, Brutus, ii, 524
Bonaparte, Jérôme, ii, 557
Bonaparte, Prince Roland, at Dockett, ii, 318
Bonghi, Professor R., ii, 297
Bonnat, L. J. F., ii, 333; portrait of Gambetta, 232
Bormettes, i, 484
Borneo, Chartered Company, i, 388-390; ii, 372, 496
Borough Corporations, unreformed, i, 191, 196, 377, 522
Bosnia and Herzegovina, annexation, ii, 249, 251, 510; administration, 477
Bosphore Égyptien, suppression, ii, 117
Boston, Mass., i, 60
Botha, General, ii, 556
Böthmer, Count, i, 105
Boulanger, General, ii, 292, 476
Bourgeois, Léon, ii, 338
Bourke, Mrs. Henry, plays Joachim's accompaniments, i, 232
Bourke, Robert (afterwards Lord Connemara), Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, i, 188, 349; opinion of Lord Derby, 209
Bourne, H. R. Fox, ii, 373
Boutet de Monvel, L. M., *Jeanne d'Arc*, ii, 341
Bouverie, Rt. Hon. E. P., i, 166
Bowring, Sir J., i, 17
Boycott, Capt., case of, i, 343
Boyd, Charles, sketch of Sir C. Dilke's life at Dockett, ii, 319
Boyer, General, i, 159
Boys, Guy, ii, 299
Brabourne, Edward, 1st Baron, i, 344
Brackenbury, Col. Charles, ii, 389, 391, 404 *note*
Brackenbury, General Sir Henry, ii, 394, 395; *Some Memories of my Spare Time*, extract from, i, 408 *note*
Bradlaugh, C., affirmation, i, 315, 521; proposes to take oath, 421; administers it to himself, 422
Bramwell, George, Baron, President of the Political Economy Club, ii, 554
Brand, President, i, 257
Brand, Sir Henry (afterwards Viscount Hampden), Speaker of the House of Commons, examined by Parnell, i, 256; knighted by mistake, 257; resignation, ii, 9
Brasseur, Jules, comedies, i, 161
Brault, General, ii, 297
Brawne, Fanny, ii, 542
Brazza, Comte de, Congo treaties, i, 534
Breitmann, Hans, i, 160
Brett, Sir Baliol (afterwards 1st Viscount Esher), i, 287
Brett, Eugénie, Lady (afterwards Viscountess Esher), i, 243, 287
Brett, Reginald (now Viscount Esher), secretary to Lord Hartington, i, 267; influence on him, 448; opinion of him, 549; letter from Sir C. Dilke, ii, 59 *note*; on Egyptian policy, 98 *note*; on summoning a Cabinet, 108 *note*; letter to Sir C. Dilke, 108 *note*; member of Commission on reorganization of War Office, 441
Brialmont, General, ii, 258
Bridge, Admiral Sir Cyprian, *Sea-Power and Other Studies*, ii, 456
Bright, Jacob, Woman's Suffrage Bill, i, 99; support of Lord Hartington, 223; opposition to the treaty with Portugal, 534
Bright, John, i, 81; oratorical gift, 82, 347; possession of moral force, 219; support of Lord Hartington, 223; Chancellor of the Duchy, 306; on coercion of Ireland, 362; story of, 368; phrase "Force is no remedy," 437; resignation, 448, 470, 491; celebration at Birmingham, 525
Brighton, i, 21, 169
Bristol, meeting at, i, 141
Bristowe, C. J., at Dockett, ii, 318
British Army. *See* Army, British
British Empire, The, ii, 488 *note*
Britten, W. E. F., portrait of Ashton Dilke, i, 512; pictures, ii, 240

Broadhurst, Henry, ii, 349 *note;* member of Housing Commission, 16 *note*
Broadstairs, i, 181
Brodrick, William. *See* Midleton
Broglie, Albert, Duc de, i, 127, 487, 489; ii, 242
Brooke, Stopford, i, 160
Brookfield, Rev. W. H., i, 160
Brooks, Shirley, refuses to meet Sir C. Dilke, i, 145 *note*
Brown, Ford Madox, portrait of Fawcett, ii, 235
Browning, Robert, i, 17, 241, 289; "Red Cotton Nightcap Country," 160; ii, 542
Brownlow, Adelbert, Earl, member of Housing Commission, ii, 16 *note*
Brussels, i, 41; ii, 282
Bryce, James, 1st Viscount, Under-Sec. of State for Foreign Affairs, ii, 207; *Holy Roman Empire*, 247; Chief Sec. for Ireland, 467 *note*
Buchanan, Sir Andrew, i, 122
Buchanan, T. R., Financial Sec. to the War Office, ii, 465
Budget proposals of 1885, ii, 118, 134, 143, 144; of 1909, 526
Bulgaria, repression of disturbances, i, 205; policy, 322; ii, 246; relations with Greece, ii, 269, 293; with Turkey, 293
Bülow, Prince von, Chancellor, ii, 497; *Imperial Germany*, 497 *note;* foreign policy, 498; retirement, 515; notable speech, 561
Bulwer, Sir Henry (afterwards Lord Dalling), i, 122
Bumble Bee, dinghy, ii, 324
Burgon, Dean J. W., i, 201
Burke, Thomas H., Under-Sec. for Ireland, murdered, i, 440
Burne-Jones, Sir Edward, "Days of Creation," i, 231
Burnham, Baron. *See* Lawson
Burns, Rt. Hon. John, at the Industrial Remuneration Conference, ii, 21; member of the Cabinet, 467 *note*
Burt, Rt. Hon. T., member of the "New Party," i, 214
Burton, Sir F. W., Director of the National Gallery, i, 229
Bury, Viscount (afterwards 7th Earl of Albemarle), i, 148
Busby, lodge-keeper at Pyrford, ii, 519
Butt, Sir C. Parker, judgment in the charge against Sir C. Dilke, ii, 173
Butt, I., in Hartington-Gladstone controversy, i, 224; leader of Irish party, 228; meeting with Gen. Grant, 228; on Obstruction, 234
Buxton, Major, ii, 390
Buxton, Rt. Hon. Sydney, member of the Cabinet, ii, 467 *note*
Bylandt, Baron de, i, 227
Byles, Sir W. P., on protection of native races, ii, 374

Cabinet, dissensions on Irish policy, i, 346; troubles in, 444; free speech for members of, ii, 105, 106; predominance of Scottish members, 466
Caillaux, Mdme., ii, 338
Cairnes, Prof. J. E., member of Radical Club, i, 100 *note*
Cairns, Hugh, 1st Earl, i, 179
Cairo, ii, 296; evacuation, i, 554
Calais, i, 113
California, i, 65
Calino, the cat, ii, 240, 566
Calmette, Gaston, ii, 338
Cambon, Paul, at Dockett, ii, 317; Ambassador to London, 340
Cambridge, H.R.H. Duke of, Commander-in-Chief, i, 137; attack of gout, 284; army reform, 472; relief of Gordon, ii, 35; opposition to changes, 413; retirement, 422
Cambridge Review, i, 28 *note*
Cambridge University, Trinity Hall, i, 24; ii, 558; Union Society debates, i, 30; ii, 563; Commission, i, 200
Cameroons, proposed cession, i, 431; taken by Germany, 535; chiefs wish British protection, ii, 83
Campbell, Sir George, likeness to Lord Airlie, i, 289
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir Henry, support of Lord Hartington, i, 223; appointed Chief Sec. for Ireland, ii, 71 *note;* leader of Opposition, 344; Sec. of State for War, 414; reform of the army, 422; Ministry defeated, 423; Prime Minister, 444, 464, 466 *note;* criticism on, 552
Camporeale, Princess, ii, 297
Canada, i, 61; treaty with France, 400
Cannes, i, 514
"Cannibal Islands," King of the, in London, i, 415
Canning, George, character of foreign policy, ii, 493
Cannock Chase, meeting at, ii, 280
Canterbury, Archbishop of (Randall T. Davidson), character of his speech on the Congo scandal, ii, 549; as a talker, 550

Canton, i, 194
Cap Brun, i, 261
Caprivi, Count, foreign policy, ii, 483
Capus, Alfred, ii, 545
Cardwell, Edward, 1st Viscount, i, 279
Carey, James, evidence of, i, 520
Carington, Hon. Rupert, i, 210 *note*
Carington, Col. William, i, 302
Carlingford, Chichester, 1st Baron, i, 162, 179, 266; his wife, 199, 291; appointed Lord President, 507 *note*; on Sir W. Harcourt's Irish policy, 520; member of the Committee on reform of Local Government, ii, 11; Junius papers given to, 233. *See also* Waldegrave
Carlyle, T., i, 161
Carnarvon, Henry, 4th Earl of, Colonial Secretary, protest against his policy, i, 195; resignation, 241; on Redistribution, ii, 71; Viceroy of Ireland, 154; political views, 154
Carnot, President, assassination, ii, 476
Carrington, Charles Robert, 3rd Baron, member of the Housing Commission, ii, 16 *note*; member of the Cabinet, 467 *note*
Carter, Alderman R. M., i, 141
Caryll, John, i, 12
Casa Laigleisia, Marquis of. *See* Rancez
Casimir-Périer, Auguste C. V., i, 148
Casimir-Périer, Jean, afterwards President, i, 148, 405
Cassagnac, Paul de, i, 110
Casswell, Robert, i, 43, 64
Castalia, floating hospital, ii, 23
Castelar, E., Professor of Political Economy at Madrid, i, 147; at Paris, ii, 292
Castiglione, Mdme., ii, 557
Caterham, asylum at, ii, 24
Caucus, in Chelsea, i, 172; at Bradford and Birmingham, 268
Cavagnari, Sir Louis, assassinated at Kabul, i, 298
Cavalaire, i, 483, 484 *note*; ii, 524
Cavendish, Lord Edward, support of Lord Hartington, i, 223
Cavendish, Lord Frederick, support of Lord Hartington, i, 223; member of the Liberal Central Association, 233; appointed Chief Sec. for Ireland, 440, 444; murdered, 440, 444
Cecil, Lord Hugh, criticism of the House of Commons, ii, 471 *note*
Central Asian question, ii, 87, 115, 116
Cetewayo, proposed restoration of, i, 531
Challemel-Lacour, Paul, i, 155, 534; Ambassador to London, 353; stories of, 353; head of Commission for a treaty of commerce with England, 393
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. Austen, ii, 168; at the funeral of Sir C. Dilke, 532
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. Joseph, Chairman of Education League, i, 94; political views, 94; ii, 183, 188, 264, 272, 274; views on a Republic, i, 140, 144, 303; speech on Second Chambers, 144; at St. James's Hall, 164; attack on Liberal party, 165; defeated at Sheffield, 178; M.P. for Birmingham, 202; attack of gout, 202; opinion of Gladstone's policy, 210; member of the "New Party," 214; of Liberal Central Association, 233; on policy of the Government, 273; scene with Lord Hartington, 293; on political situation, 296; compact with Sir C. Dilke, 304; ii, 1; President of the Board of Trade, i, 309; on foreign policy, 337; on Coercion Bill, 361, 364, 372; on grant to Prince Leopold, 424; Irish policy, 441 *note*; ii, 146 *note*, 192, 196, 199-202; urges Sir C. Dilke to accept Irish Secretaryship, i, 442; in Sweden, 476; at Sandringham, 492; unwillingness to accept Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, 493; threat to resign, 494; ii, 56, 110, 112; opinion of *Greater Britain*, i, 501; friendship with Sir C. Dilke, 501; ii, 107, 221; at Swansea, i, 516; speech on the Bright celebration at Birmingham, 525; South African policy, 530; Egyptian policy, 547, 548; ii, 97, 254, 255; relations with Hartington, ii, 3, 212; views on Woman's Suffrage, 9; member of Committee on reform of Local Government, 11; views on the Housing of the Poor, 19; on the relief of Gordon, 34; against the election of Zebehr, 41; on expedition to the Soudan, 47; lines on Gladstone, 51; on the guaranteed neutrality of Egypt, 52; on Egyptian finance, 59; in favour of a small expedition by the Nile, 60; views against the House of Lords, 65; violent speech, 69; on Redistribution, 74, 78; on policy of Lord Salisbury, 75; at Leipsic, 83; on

policy of the Colonial Office, 83; on army reform, 90; congratulations to Mrs. Pattison on her engagement, 92; "Unauthorized Programme," 95, 104-106; statement of his policy, 96; views on the Civil List, 101; "ransom theory," 104, 182; criticism on his policy, 105; on right of free speech, 106; plan of arbitration with Russia, 117; on self-government for Ireland, 129-132, 191; interviews with Card. Manning, 130, 131; on the Irish Land Purchase Bill, 134; resignation, 135, 211, 212; congratulations on Sir C. Dilke's speech, 146; portraits, 146, 235; views on manhood suffrage, 147; Home Rule policy, 151 *note*; vehemence of his political views, 162; defence of Sir C. Dilke, 166, 170; belief in him, 179; opinion of Gladstone's manifesto, 184; at Hawarden, 190; relations with Card. Manning, 191; at the meeting at Devonshire House, 203; criticism on the speeches of Morley, 204; refuses offer of Admiralty, 205; opposition to Home Rule Bill, 215, 217; attacks on, 223; relations with Gladstone, 269; mission to America, 270; urges Sir C. Dilke to stand for Parliament, 272; on the General Election, 283; debating power, 287; change in relations with Sir C. Dilke, 288; on Miners Bill, 288; characteristics, 292; on National Defence, 456; Tariff Reform policy, 458; sympathy on the death of Lady Dilke, 462; on an alliance with Germany, 490; Colonial policy, 495; defence of British army, 497. Letters to Sir C. Dilke, i, 424, 493, 501, 516, 517; ii, 116, 151, 152, 190, 191, 197, 217, 221, 347 *note*, 456; to W. E. Gladstone, ii, 134, 136, 192; to Lord Hartington, 213

Chambers, J. G., President of Camb. University Boat Club, i, 50 *note*

Channel Islands, ii, 479

Channel Tunnel project, i, 427

Chantaboon, evacuation of, ii, 486

Chantilly, ii, 336

Chartered Companies: Borneo, i, 388-390; ii, 372, 496; Niger, 373, 497

Chartist meeting, i, 11

Chartres, Duc de, i, 264

Chateaubriand, F. R., Vicomte de, criticism of writings, ii, 544

Chatfield, Caroline A. Duncombe, i, 8, 11, 87, 183, 348; death 358

Chatfield, Mary, marriage, i, 3, 8. *See* Dilke, M. Mary

Chefket Pasha, director of Bulgarian massacres, i, 207

Chelmsford, Frederick, 2nd Baron, disaster at Isandhlwana, i, 271

Chelsea, borough, i, 74; elections, 79, 499; ii, 171, 193, 224; meetings at, i, 144; ii, 169, 189, 197, 212, 214, 280; memories of, ii, 314; lecture on, 314 *note*, 315 *note*, 538

Chemnitz, Philippe, ii, 247

Chenery, T., editor of the *Times*, ii, 555

Chérif Pasha, President of Council, deposed, i, 456; Prime Minister, ii, 28; resignation, 28

Chéruel, A., *Mémoires de Fouquet*, ii, 293 *note*, 307 *note*

Chesney, Sir George, member of Council, at Quetta, ii, 295; joint letter on National Defence, 417-419, 451-457

Chesson, Mr., ii, 266, 372; secretary of Aborigines Protection Society, i, 539; death, ii 273 *note*; tribute to his memory, 273 *note*

Chevalier, Michel, i, 55, 122, 153

Chevrillon, André, ii, 523, 528; impressions of Sir C. Dilke, 529

Chewton, i, 291

Childers, Erskine, *Riddle of the Sands*, ii, 245

Childers, Rt. Hon. H. C. E., Sec. of State for War, i, 306; apology to Queen Victoria, 472; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 492; at the conference on Egypt, 543; on the Suez Canal, 550; member of the Committee on reform of Local Government, ii, 11; schemes on Egyptian finance, 51, 56; on Redistribution, 77; on the failure of the parcel post, 89; wish to resign, 111; proposed increase of the wine duties, 128; "suspended" resignation, 133; Budget proposals of 1885, 118, 134, 143, 144

China, rumour of hostilities with Russia, i, 356; use of torture, ii, 372; forced to yield territory to France, 486; Kiang-Hung Convention, 486; war with Japan, 489

Cholera, measures against, ii, 23

Cholsey, i, 53

Chorley, H. F., musical critic for the *Athenæum*, i, 13; ii, 561

Chotek, Count, i, 119

Christian Socialism, meaning of the term, i, 58

Churchill, Lord Randolph, i, 229; introduction to Gambetta, 187; defence of his constituency, 191; political views, 243; ii, 148; draft of his motion on the Eastern Question, i, 248; member of the Fourth Party, 267; breach with Sir C. Dilke, 386; criticism of Lord Derby, 445; meeting at Aston, 473; criticism of Kilmainham Treaty, 488; reconciliation with Royal Family, 523; against the retention of the Soudan, ii, 34; recklessness, 37; attacks on Tewfik, 49; forgetful flightiness, 49; threats against Mr. Chamberlain, 70; interview with Sir C. Dilke, 72; misrepresentation on the Redistribution Bill, 102; failure of his Irish scheme, 265; resignation, 266. Letters to Sir C. Dilke, i, 243-247
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston, ii, 72, 253 *note*, 548
Cinderford, ii, 328
City Guilds Bill, ii, 11
City Liberal Club, meeting at, ii, 145
Civil List expenditure, i, 139, 142, 148-151, 166, 170, 423, 426, 449; ii, 101, 119-121, 527
Civil Service, open to competitive examination, i, 86, 138
Claremont, i, 518
Clarendon, Edward, 5th Earl of, style of his manners, ii, 564
Claretie, Jules, at Dockett, ii, 318; Director of the Théâtre Français, 339; in London, 340
Clarke, Dr. Andrew, i, 348
Clarke, General Sir Andrew, at conference on Egypt, i, 543
Clarke, Sir Campbell, ii, 337
Clarke, Sir George Sydenham. *See* Sydenham
Clarke, Colonel Stanley, at Paris, i, 404
Clarke, Mrs. Stanley, at Strawberry Hill, i, 240
Clary, Désirée, i, 20; ii, 524 *note*
Claude Lorrain, ii, 227
Clemenceau, M., interview with Gladstone, i, 519; resignation, ii, 515
Clemens, S. (Mark Twain), i, 160
Clerkenwell, condition of, i, 510
Clinchamp, Comtesse Berthe de, ii, 336
Closure, scheme of, i, 362, 364, 423
Cluseret, General, offer of services to England, ii, 118
Cobb, H. P., ii, 271
Cobden Club, ii, 146; dinner at, i, 464
Cochin, Denys, ii, 338
Cockburn, Sir Alexander, i, 197 *note*
Coercion Bills, i, 195, 360, 363, 369, 438; ii, 133, 145
Cole, Sir Henry, i, 7
Coleridge, Hartley, parody of *Lucy*, ii, 567
Coleridge, John Duke, 1st Baron, Lord Chief Justice, i, 284
Colley, Edith, Lady Pomeroy, i, 367 *note*
Colley, General Sir George, defeats in South Africa, i, 366; killed at Majuba, 367
Collings, Jesse, i, 319; member of the Housing Commission, ii, 16 *note*
Collins, Sir Robert, belief in Sir C. Dilke, ii, 178
Collyer, Dr. Robert, i, 60; ii, 542
Colomb, Sir John, *Defence of Great and Greater Britain*, ii, 403
Colomb, Admiral Philip, ii, 403; opinion of *Imperial Defence*, 411
Colorado, Plains of, i, 72
Colvin, Sir Auckland, i, 475; at conference on Egypt, 543
Colvin, Sir Sidney, i, 280
Commons, House of, in 1868, i, 80; stormy scene in, 148; expulsion of Irish members, 361, 363; meeting at, 548; character in 1905, ii, 470
Commons Preservation Society, work of the, i, 101, 259
Compensation for Disturbance Bill, i, 344
Compton, Lord William, afterwards 5th Marquis of Northampton, i, 510
Congo, proposed treaty, i, 418; ii, 85 *note*; debate on, i, 535; ii, 84, 379-385; deputation, i, 549
Connaught, H.R.H. Duke of, allowance, i, 138; appointed to the command at Aldershot, ii, 415
Connemara, Robert, Baron. *See* Bourke, Robert
Constans, Jean A. E., i, 285; appearance, 286
Constant, Baron d'Estournelles de. *See* Estournelles
Constantinople, ii, 268, 293; Conference at, i, 207; rumour of occupation by Russians, 243; strategic centre of the world, ii, 253
Constitutional Conference, ii, 528
Cook, C. A., ii, 536, 540
Cook, Sir Theodore, fencing, ii, 234
Cooke, Joseph, i, 17
Cooksey, John, ii, 327
Coombe Warren, ii, 43, 45

Coquelin, B. C., i, 290; at Dockett, ii, 318
Cornwall, Barry, i, 17
Corrupt Practices Bill, i, 421, 503, 526; ii, 163
Corry, Montagu, private secretary to Lord Beaconsfield. *See* Rowton, Baron
Corti, Count, Ambassador at Constantinople, suggests compromise between Turkey and Montenegro, i, 322, 382
Cotes, C. C., member of Liberal Central Association, i, 233
County Boards Bill, i, 281
County Franchise Bill, i, 423
Courcel, Baron de, i, 341, 383
Courtenay, Louisa, i, 146
Courtney, Leonard, 1st Baron, member of Radical Club, i, 100 *note*; possession of moral force, 219; declines offer of Sec. of the Board of Trade, 316; declines appointment on the Commission for Reforms under Berlin Treaty, 317; on Woman's Suffrage, ii, 7, 8; charges Sir C. Dilke with "Jingoism," 494
Cowen, Joseph, political views, i, 196, 211; speech, 196; member of "New Party," 214; anti-Russian views, 215; support of Lord Hartington, 223; kindness to Sir C. Dilke, ii, 211, 225
Cowper, Francis, 7th Earl, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, i, 306; resignation, 438; on Redistribution Bill, ii, 66
Cowper, Henry, at York House, i, 285
Cranbrook, Gathorne, 1st Earl of. *See* Hardy, Gathorne
Crawford, Mrs. Emily, correspondent of *Daily News*, i, 514
Crémieux, Isaac A., i, 112
Crete, rebellion in, ii, 492; administration, 512
Crewe, Robert, 1st Marquis of, member of Cabinet, ii, 467 *note*
Crimean War, i, 21
Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1871, i, 169
Crispi *Memoirs*, i, 334 *note*; ii, 477 *note*, 491 *note*
Croke, Archbishop, views on Nationalism, i, 374
Cromer, Evelyn, 1st Earl of, i, 454 *note*; *Modern Egypt*, 458 *note*; ii, 48 *note*; memorandum on Egypt, i. 545; Consul-General at Cairo, 555; ii, 296; on abandonment of Khartoum, i, 556, 557; ii, 29; at Eastwell, ii, 26; telegrams and despatches, 29, 33, 36, 37; supports Gen. Gordon's policy, 37, 39, 40; on Gordon and Zebehr, 39; demands expedition to Khartoum, 44; in London, 48; scheme for control of Egypt, 48; at meeting of Cabinet, 51; on evacuation of Egypt, 255, 257 *note*
Crooks, Rt. Hon. Will, ii, 362
Cross, Rt. Hon. J. K., i, 143; support of Lord Hartington, 223; Under-Sec. for India, ii, 57
Cross, R. A., 1st Viscount, Home Sec., i, 302; London Water Companies Bill, 302; member of Housing Commission, ii, 16 *note*
Crowe, Sir Eyre, on the charge against Sir C. Dilke, ii, 178
Crowe, Sir Joseph Archer, ii, 178; career, i, 433; at Marlborough House, 520
Crown Private Estates Bill, i, 166
Cuffnells, Lyndhurst, i, 491
Cullen, Cardinal, on Irish University Bill, i, 165
Currie, Mary M., Lady, i, 200
Currie, Philip, (afterwards Lord), i, 264; memorandum on Cyprus, 325; views on delimitation of Afghan frontiers, 532, 533
Curtin, Governor Andrew G., i, 91
Curzon, George, Earl, Under-Sec. for Foreign Affairs, on Congo atrocities, ii, 380; attacks on French policy in Siam, 486
Cushing, Caleb, i, 153
Cust, Dr. Robert, ii, 224
Cyprus, administration, i, 276, 325; ii, 512; occupation of, ii, 480
Czechs, hatred of the Germans, ii, 247

Daily News, Mr. Dilke manager of, i, 4; Sir C. Dilke suggests article in, 315
Dalhousie, John W., Earl of. *See* Ramsay
Dalling, Henry Bulwer, Lord, i, 122
Dalou, Jules, sculptor, i, 265; reliefs by, ii, 235
Dalrymple, Charles, ii, 79
Danube Question, i, 407; ii, 251
Dardanelles, the, defences of, ii, 491 *note*, 492
Darenth, smallpox camp at, ii, 23, 148
Dart, the, i, 19
Dartmouth, i, 19

Davenport, Bromley, style of conversation, i, 283
Davey, Sir Horace, i, 259
Davidson, Randall T., Archbishop of Canterbury, ii, 549, 550
Davis, Henry, ii, 328 *note*
Davis, W. J., on Employers' Liability Bill, ii, 349 *note*
Davitt, Michael, rearrested, i, 369; imprisoned, 436; released, 440; character of policy, ii, 152 *note*
Davoust, General, ii, 299
Davydof, Prince Orlof, i, 92
Dawnay, Guy, offers to go to Gordon, ii, 49
Deakin, Alfred, Chief Sec. of Victoria, ii, 268, 346, 360; on the *Problems of Greater Britain*, 275
Death duties, equalization of, ii, 278
Decazes, Duc, hostility to England, ii, 483
Defence, national, expenditure on, i, 242; ii, 405
Defence Committee, ii, 423, 443; reconstituted, 441, 443
Delcassé, M., ii, 338; foreign policy, 500; resignation, 509 *note*
Delyannis, M., Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, i, 260 *note*
Della Sala, General, interview with Sir C. Dilke, i, 451
Denver, i, 62
Dépêche Coloniale, ii, 500
Derby, meeting at, i, 167
Derby, Edward Henry, 15th Earl of, policy towards Turkey, i, 206; despatch demanding reparation, 207; proposes Conference, 207; signs Protocol, 208; character of his policy, 213, 218 *note*, 279, 391, 537; withdraws resignation, 241; resigns Secretaryship of Foreign Affairs, 248; appearance, 290; criticism on, 445; policy in Egypt, 455; ii, 52, 97; at Cobden Club dinner, i, 464; on postponement of legislative measures, 517; on an expedition to the Soudan, ii, 48; wish to resign, 111; support of Irish Land Purchase Bill, 133 *note*
Desborough, William, 1st Baron, ii, 165; fencing, 233
Deschanel, M., ii, 338
Devonshire, Spencer Compton, 8th Duke of. *See* Hartington
Devonshire, Louise, 8th Duchess of. *See* Manchester, Louise
Devonshire House, meetings at, i, 200; ii, 203
Dickens, Charles, i, 13, 17; criticism on, ii, 541
Dickson, James, views on the Local Government of Ireland scheme, ii, 140
Dilke, Ashton, birth, i, 8; letter from his brother on aim in life, 63; at Cambridge, 87; tour in Russia, 92 163; symptoms of consumption, 92; gift from his brother, 162; letter of advice to his brother, 183; the *Weekly Dispatch*, 183; illness and death, 261, 319, 512
Dilke, Charles Wentworth (b. 1742), i, 3
Dilke, Charles Wentworth (b. 1789), i, 3; ii, 241; clerk in Admiralty, i, 3; editor of *Athenæum*, 4; manager of *Daily News*, 4; contributions to *Notes and Queries*, 4; antiquary and Radical, 5; friends, 5; marriage, 6; method of educating his son, 6; death of his wife, 8; care of his grandson, 8; relations with his son, 9; method of educating his grandson, 12; religious views, 18; distaste for athletics, 29; on art of debate, 33; interest in his grandson's life at College, 40; menaced with loss of sight, 42; on *vulgarity*, 43; last letter to his grandson, 47; illness, 47; death, 48; distribution of his books, 161; ii, 233
Dilke, Charles Wentworth, first Baronet, i, 6; birth and education, 6; at Florence, 6; founds the *Gardeners' Chronicle* and the *Agricultural Gazette*, 7; talent for organization, 7; work on the Exhibitions of 1851 and 1862, 7, 23; ii, 236, 241; marriage, i, 8; relations with his father, 9; friendship with the Royal Family, 10; Commissioner for the French International Exhibition, 14; baronetcy conferred, 21; foreign friends, 23; M.P. for Wallingford, 53; loses his seat, 79; tour through the N. of Europe, 87; at St. Petersburg, 87; illness and death, 87
Dilke, Sir Charles Wentworth, second Baronet, i, 1; ancestors, 2; grandfather, 3; father, 6; birth, 8; death of his mother, 9; interest in architecture, 11, 16, 20, 58; travels in England, 11, 14, 16, 18; ii, 520; method of education, i, 12, 15; love of the theatre, 13, 20; nervous temperament, 14, 15; at Paris, 14, 19, 79, 103, 124-132, 153, 181, 225, 260, 269, 270, 285, 296, 299, 339,

372, 386, 393, 403, 406, 451, 513, 523, 545; ii, 501 *note*, 522, 528; novel *Friston Place*, i, 16; meetings with famous people, 16, 20; religious views, 17, 36, 57; gives up shooting, 18; acquaintance with King Jerome, 20; criticism of Fechter's Hamlet, 20; interest in military affairs, 21; at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, 21, 24; characteristics, 26, 46, 154; ii, 159, 163, 242, 319-322, 327, 351, 451, 518, 519; friendship with Steavenson, i, 26; learns to row, 27; ambition, 27; industry, 27; ii, 535; rowing, i, 29, 44, 45, 50; ii, 317, 518; joins Volunteers, i, 30; attends Union Society, 30; on art of debate, 33; Vice-President of the Union, 34, 42; studies law and history, 35; influence of Warr, 37; report of his first race, 38; travels abroad, 41, 58, 79; ii, 521; impressions of Brussels, i, 41; Secretary and Treasurer of the College Boat Club, 42; a walking race, 42; wins the essay prize, 43, 49; refuses to study Greek, 43; wins a scholarship, 45; life at Cambridge, 46; slow development, 46; criticism of an article in *Athenæum*, 47; death of his grandfather, 48; Senior Legalist, 50; President of Union, 50; character of speeches, 51; views on Reform Bill of 1866, 52; on reading for honours, 54; articles in *Athenæum*, 54; ii, 539; course of reading, i, 55; *History of the Prevalent Opinions in Politics*, 56; treatise on *Radicalism*, 56, 59; ii, 537; *Greater Britain*, i, 60, 65-69, 501; ii, 537; tour in America, i, 60, 194; Canada, 61; Australia, 62; literary projects, 62; letter to his brother on his aim in life, 63; impressions of America, 66; *Oparo, or the Enchanting Isle*, 66; attack of fever, 69; on treatment of natives, 70; ii, 368-378; friendship with J. S. Mill, i, 71, 78; ii, 342; description of Colorado landscape, i, 72; candidate for Chelsea, 74; on purity of election, 74; on the Irish Land Question, 75; Labour, 76; taxation, 76; army reform, 77, 136; ii, 90, 387-399, 404, 550; M.P. for Chelsea, i, 79, 171, 303, 499; ii, 171, 193; at Toulon, i, 79, 303, 511, 514, 523; ii, 4, 15, 275; attends Parliament, i, 81; opinion of Bright and Gladstone, 82; charm of his conversation, 84; first speech in Parliament, 85; M.A. degree, 86 *note;* independent views, 86, 97, 185, 217; death of his father, 87; member of Political Economy Club, 88; at St. Petersburg, 91; impressions of Russia, 92; Chairman of the London Branch of Education League, 94; opposes religious teaching in schools, 96; seconds the Address, 96; resigns Chairmanship, 97; evidence on working of the ballot, 98; views on Woman's Suffrage, 99; Sec. of the Radical Club, 100; ii, 468; on land tenure, i, 100; Chairman of the Commons Preservation Society, 101; work on Aborigines Protection Society, 102; dislike of Louis Napoleon, 102; adventures during Franco-German War, 104-113; ii, 231; at Moscow, i, 116; on neutrality of the Black Sea, 120; censure of the Government, 121, 273-275, 298; return to the war, 122; correspondent of *Daily News*, 125; ambulance cap, 132; sympathy with France, 133; Hours of Polling Bill, 135, 178, 240, 257 *note;* ii, 5; on redistribution of seats, i, 138, 192, 233, 258; at Newcastle, 139; on Civil List expenditure, 139, 142, 149-151, 166, 449; ii, 101; ideal or model State, i, 139, 142; theoretical avowal of Republicanism, 139, 170; at Bristol and Leeds, 141; riot at Bolton, 143 *note;* at Birmingham, 144, 164, 270; refuses to join republican clubs, 144; boycotted for his republican views, 145; friendship with Sir W. Lawson, 146; first marriage, 147; at Exeter Hall, 152; friendship with Gambetta, 153, 156; patriotism, 154; on origin of the war of 1870, 156-159, 269; friends, 160, 229-231; ii, 241, 289, 317-319, 327, 332-341; distribution of his grandfather's books, i, 161; ii, 232; hands over one-sixth of his property to his brother, i, 162; purchases *Notes and Queries*, 163; at Derby, 167; on Free Land and Free Trade, 167; at Monaco, 168, 176; *Prince Florestan*, 168, 175; ii, 537; on amendment of the Criminal Law, i, 169; on the Irish Peace Preservation Bill of 1873, 169; founds Eleusis Club, 172; at Hammersmith, 179; opposition to Whig policy, 180; death of his wife, 181; letters from Gambetta, 182, 187, 290, 312, 324, 402, 404, 434; in Algeria, 183; attack of

smallpox, 184; *Papers of a Critic*, 184; Unreformed Municipal Corporations Bill, 191, 197, 377, 522; working of the Ballot Act, 192; Allotments Bill, 192; scheme for history of XIXth century, 194, 296; in Japan and China, 194; Java, 195; on the administration of Ireland, 195; amendments to the Universities Bill, 197; on traditions of Trinity Hall, 197; ii, 559; attack on the Royal Academy, i, 198; at Strawberry Hill, 199; dinner parties, 200, 323; ii, 241; at Devonshire House, i, 200; Chairman of Elections Committee, 202; on Eastern Question, 203-214, 218 *note*, 222, 236, 250, 260; ii, 491-493; opinion of Lord Hartington's policy, i, 210; denunciation of Russian methods, 213; member of "New Party," 214; policy of intervention in the East, 216; views on "moral force," 219; taste in art, 231; in music, 232; member of Liberal Central Association, 233; at Portsmouth dockyard, 234; on a new Greece, 237; on horrors of war, 239; Registration Bill, 240 *note*, 258; forms a Greek Committee, 241, 278; views on expenditure on defence, 242; letters from Lord R. Churchill, 243-247; against calling out the reserves, 251; policy supporting Greece, 255, 278, 328; serves on the Committee on Public Business, 256; extension of the franchise, 258; at Cap Brun, 261; on Afghan question, 262; on South Africa, 271; at Mentmore, 273; lines on, 276; ii, 15; on administration of Cyprus, i, 277, 325; ii, 493; appointments from Greek societies, i, 277; at Liverpool Reform Club, 279; Knowsley, 279; in possession of a curious document, 279; interview with Sir G. Berry, 280; on representation, 281; relations with Parnell, 281; standard of conversation, 283; at Aston Clinton, 285; canoe, 290; at Dudbrook, 290; at funeral of Lady Waldegrave, 291; interviews with Card. Manning, 292; ii, 129-132; meets Prince of Wales, i, 302, 403; compact with Chamberlain, 304; ii, 1; refuses offer of Under-Sec. for the Colonies, i, 307; on republican form of government, 308; interviews with Gladstone, 309; ii, 110, 256; accepts the Under-Sec. for Foreign Affairs, i, 309; suggests an article in *Daily News*, 315; meeting with the King of Greece, 329; ii, 527; operation, i, 335; at Walmer Castle, 337; use of cipher, 341; German views on, 341; on crisis in Cabinet, 346-348; supervision of the Commercial Department, 349; on reduction of wine duties, 350-352; criticism of French Government, 355; on Secret Service money, 357, 365; declines Greek and Turkish decorations, 358; death of his grandmother, 358; secretaries, 359; on coercion, 361; on the closure, 364, 423; opposition to annexation of Transvaal, 366, 368; on relations with Vatican, 376; on Greek frontier question, 378; power of terse reply to questions, 384; India Council, 385; on evacuation of Kandahar, 385; charged with subscribing to *Freiheit*, 386; breach with Lord Randolph Churchill, 386; on right of asylum, 387; on North Borneo concession, 389; interviews with Gambetta, 393, 395, 486; negotiations for a treaty of commerce with France, 393-400; deference to Gladstone, 409; meeting with Lord Beaconsfield, 410; ii, 548; political views, i, 412; ii, 189, 195, 277-279; proposed visit to Berlin, i, 412; meets Crown Prince and Princess, 413; impressions of them, 414; work on London Government scheme, 420; opposition to grant to Prince Leopold, 423-425; proposal on Royal Grants, 426; at Sandringham, 427, 487, 492; ii, 74; opposition to Channel Tunnel project, i, 427; relations with Lord Granville, 428, 496; ii, 163; views on Russo-Persian frontier, i, 429-431; meeting with Count H. Bismarck, 432; views on Home Rule, 441 *note*; ii, 146 *note*, 148 *note*, 189 *note*, 216, 218-220, 290; refuses offer of Chief Sec. for Ireland, i, 442-444; views on policy of joint intervention in Egypt, 454-460, 465; threats to resign, 461-463; ii, 43, 119; unpopularity in France, i, 467; fencing, 481; ii, 233-235, 316, 471; riverside house, i, 481; ii, 90; punting, i, 482; visit to M. Ollivier, 483; buys land at Cavalaire, 483, 484 *note*; proposed admission to Cabinet, 491; appointed President of Local Government

Board, 495; congratulations on appointment, 495-497; relations with Queen Victoria, 497; at Osborne, 499; Privy Councillor, 499; friendship with Chamberlain, 501; ii, 107, 218, 221; system of patronage, i, 504; ii, 22; character of administrative work, i, 505-511; protests against over-centralization, 506; ii, 16; at Windsor, i, 511; death of his brother, 512; estimate of Gambetta, 513; draft of Local Government Bill, 518, 527; at Claremont, 518; Marlborough House, 520, 538; on character of Irish movement, 520 *note;* ii, 466; advocates delimitation of Afghan frontiers, i, 532; at conference on Egypt, 543; meeting with ex-Khedive Ismail, 545 *note;* ii, 49; on Woman's Suffrage, ii, 6; Chairman of Committee on the Local Government Bill, 11-14; at Paisley, 14; Chairman of the Commission on Housing of Working Classes, 16-20, 113, 277; President of Industrial Remuneration Conference, 21, 113; views on political reform, 22; inspection of villages, 22 *note;* measures against cholera and small-pox, 23; revaccinated, 23; inspection of schools, asylums and ports, 24; elected member of Grillion's Club, 25, 555; on despatch of Gordon to Khartoum, 29-35, 50; the Egyptian question, 32, 52, 97, 98 *note*, 251-258; powers of debate, 38 *note;* on proposed election of Zebehr, 41; policy on the Soudan, 47; advocates naval expedition by the Nile, 48, 60; interview with Sir H. Ponsonby, 54; on declaring Egypt bankrupt, 56, 59; Redistribution Bill, 64-79, 101-103, 111; at Oldham and Manchester, 68; interview with R. Churchill, 72; with Lord Rowton, 74; conferences with Lord Salisbury, 74, 124; on Congo Treaty with Portugal, 85; Central Asian scheme, 87; correspondence with Lord Roberts, 88; villa "La Sainte Campagne," 90, 229; cottage at Dockett Eddy, 90, 157, 165, 229, 319-324, 518; becomes engaged to Mrs. Mark Pattison, 91; at Hardwick, 103; on summoning a Cabinet, 108 *note;* Seats Bill, 111; on taxation proposals, 113, 118; preparations for war with Russia, 120; congratulations on passing of the Redistribution Bill, 125; presented with a bronze "Victory," 126 *note;* work on Housing Commission, 126, 164, 166, 277; in Edinburgh, 127; opposition to increase of wine duties, 128, 143; interviews with Card. Manning on Local Government Ireland scheme, 129-132; opposition to Irish Land Purchase Bill, 132, 133 *note;* resignation, 134; at Dublin, 138-142; "suspended" resignation, 143; at City Liberal Club, 145; Cobden Club, 146; leaves office, 148; protest against Errington baronetcy, 149-151; views on politics, 153; Radicalism, 160, 537; character of his policy, 160; treatment of colleagues, 163; of subordinates, 163; at Reform Club, 165; charge against, 165-170; at Highbury, 168-170, 183, 194; second marriage, 171, 226; not included in the new Ministry, 172, 206; charge against dismissed, 172, 173; result of rehearing of the case, 174-178, 225; rejected by his constituency, 180, 224; at Pyrford, 199, 229, 324-326, 547; Rugby, 203; meeting at Devonshire House, 203; at Chelsea Liberal Association, 212; house in Sloane Street, 229-240; pictures and portraits, 230-233, 235-240; miniatures, 236; study, 237; books, 238-240; medal, 239; cats, 240, 333, 567; *The Present Position of European Politics*, 245-254, 260, 387-389; Chairman of Chelsea Board of Guardians, 264; at Constantinople, 268, 293; *Problems of Greater Britain*, 270, 274, 400, 537; at Royat, 272; in India, 272, 400; elected Hon. President of Liberal Four Hundred in Forest of Dean, 273, 328; on the limitation of hours of work, 278; on municipal Socialism, 278, 343; M.P. for Forest of Dean, 279, 284, 465, 528; addresses to miners, 280, 525; at Brussels, 282; on leadership of the Liberals, 283; return to Parliament, 285; Bill to amend the system of voting in local elections, 285; against restriction of immigrant aliens, 286, 347; criticism of Ministers, 287, 548-552, 565; change in relations with Chamberlain, 288; Miners Bill, 288, 350 *note;* reception in Greece, 293; at Quetta, 294; ride to the Gomul Pass, 295; at Cairo, 296; Rome,

296; Spezia, 296; at the French manœuvres, 297-300; visit to Bismarck, 303-306; interest in House of Commons, 310-314; memory, 314; lecture on "Old Chelsea," 314 *note*, 315 *note*, 538; "Athletics for Politicians," 316; sells house at Toulon, 326; at Forest of Dean, 327-331; knowledge of French, 332; at Chantilly, 335; work in cause of Labour, 342-367, 472; advocacy of trade-unionism, 343; on Taff Vale judgment, 344; on Old Age Pensions, 352; on work of Home Office, 353-355; meetings on Labour policy, 356; presented with a gold matchbox, 356; Wages Boards Bill, 361; President of Royal Statistical Society, 364; on administration of India, 368-370; views against slavery, 371; paper on Indentured and Forced Labour, 376; defence of the weak, 378; on Congo atrocities, 379-385; *The British Army*, 391; opinion of universal compulsory service, 396; on defence of India, 400-402; Imperial defence, 402-406, 416, 421, 537; paper on the Defence Expenditure, 405; at Aldershot, 406; collaborates with S. Wilkinson, 406-411, 452, 537; joint letter on Imperial Defence, 417-419, 451-457; on reorganization of War Office, 424; on naval reserve force, 426; pamphlet on Army Reform, 427; on need of a strong navy, 429, 437-439, 447; on Boer War, 431-436, 496; on failure of Mr. Brodrick's scheme, 440; on work of Defence Committee, 443; objections to Mr. Haldane's scheme, 446; "Strong at all Points," 447; on the need for Docks, 448; the Territorial army, 449; interview with J. Redmond, 459; with Lloyd George, 459; death of his second wife, 461; Radical programme, 469; Chairman of Committee on Income Tax, 472; criticism on foreign policy, 475-482, 485-488, 491-493, 510-514; on cession of Heligoland, 478-481; acquisition of Zanzibar, 479-482; knowledge of foreign affairs, 484, 533, 567; dialogue with M. Lavisse, 487; on Newfoundland fishing dispute, 487; *The British Empire*, 488 *note*; charge of "Jingoism," 494; on need for cordial relations with France, 498; "An Arrangement with France," 500; "Torpeur Républicaine," 502 *note*; on guarantee of peace, 505; the policy of *ententes*, 506; faculty of enjoyment, 517; at Aosta, 521; Provence, 522, 529; Hyères, 523, 529; illness, 528-531; last letter, 531; death, 532; funeral, 532; tact, 533; literary works, 535-541; attitude to literature, 536, 541, 566; interest in Keats, 542-544, 567, preference for French literature, 544-546, 566; his handwriting difficult to decipher, 546; talks on miscellaneous topics, 553-567; at the Record Office, 558; habit of humming music, 560; at Oxford, 563; attends funeral of King Edward VII., 563; contempt for the study of English grammar, 567; recollections of Gladstone, 569. Letters: to A. J. Balfour, ii, 451-454; to R. Brett, 59 *note*, 108 *note*; to J. Chamberlain, 209, 214, 216, 218-220, 254; to A. Dilke, i, 63; to Sir M. Grant-Duff, i, 443; ii, 138, 143; to his father, i, 28, 44, 61; to W. E. Gladstone, ii, 150, 152, 255 *note*-258 *note*, 268; to his grandfather, i, 12, 18, 32; to Lord Granville, 495, 496; to Sir W. Harcourt, 482; to Card. Manning, ii, 149; to J. Morley, 210 *note*; to J. Reinach, 308, 476 *note*; to Lord Rosebery, 206; to S. Wilkinson, 454

Dilke, Sir Charles Wentworth, 3rd Baronet, birth, i, 181; at Birmingham, 358; school, 483; at Rugby, ii, 271; at Dockett, 317; refuses Chartered South African shares, 497 *note*; at Paris, 521

Dilke, Emilia Francis, Lady, bigotry as a girl, i, 17; marries Mark Pattison, 187; attack of rheumatism, 187; friendship with Sir C. Dilke, 187; letter from him, 520 *note*; death of her husband, ii, 91; engagement to Sir C. Dilke, 91; visit to India, 91, 137 *note*; attack of typhoid fever, 91, 153, 165, 167; loyalty to Sir C. Dilke, 168; at Paris, 171; marriage, 171; congratulations on the result of charge against her husband, 174; illness, 178, 461; literary works, 226-228, 331; an art critic, 226; study of economic and industrial questions, 227; influence on the Women's Trade-Union League, 228, 348; characteristics, 229; dress, 229; portrait, 237; sketches, 239; cat story, 240; at

Royat, 244; Constantinople, 268; loyalty of the Forest of Dean people, 284; letter to Card. Manning, 293 *note*; accepts Grand Cordon of the Chefket, 294; at Karachi, 294; Dundee, 303; her dinghy, 324; wish for her husband's return to office, 460; death, 461
Dilke, Fisher, i, 2
Dilke, Katherine, Lady, marriage, i, 147; at Paris, 153; characteristics, 160; friends, 160; illness, 168, 180; at Monaco, 168; Brighton, 169; discloses the authorship of *Prince Florestan*, 177; birth of a son, 181; death, 181; portrait, ii, 235
Dilke, M. Mary (Mrs. Charles Wentworth), birth of her sons, i, 3; exhortation to Charles, 9; death, 9; religious views, 17
Dilke, Wentworth, i, 3
Dilke, William, of Chichester, i, 358, 512; death, ii, 170
Dilke, William Wentworth Grant, i, 21
Dillon, John, views on his proposed arrest, i, 370; imprisoned, 436
Dillwyn, Llewellyn, i, 83; member of the "New Party," 214; shoots pigeons, 215; Committee on Eastern Question, 251; motion on interference of the Crown in politics, 286
Dionysius V., Archbishop of Constantinople, ii, 293
Diplomacy, definition of, i, 435
Diseases Prevention Act, ii, 23
Disraeli, Rt. Hon. Benjamin. *See* Beaconsfield
Dixon, George, i, 148
Dixon, Hepworth, editor of the *Athenæum*, i, 61; his *New Russia*, ii, 539
Dockett Eddy, i, 481; ii, 142, 157, 165, 229, 239, 244, 317, 518; inscription on door of cottage, ii, 90, 324; birds, 322; swans, 323
Document, a curious, i, 279
Dodson, Rt. Hon. John G. (afterwards Lord Monk Bretton), President of the Local Government Board, i, 306, 494; story of, 368; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 495; use of patronage at Local Government Board, 504; appointed Vice-President of Agriculture, 507 *note*; and the Speakership, ii, 10; member of the Committee on reform of Local Government, 11; views against expedition to Soudan, 48
Donisthorpe, Horace, ii, 325
Doran, Dr. John, editor of *Notes and Queries*, i, 163
Dorking, battle of, ii, 325
Douay, General Félix, i, 159
Douglas, Sir Robert, *Europe and the Far East*, ii, 123 *note*, 402 *note*
Drew, Mr., editor of the *Transvaal Leader*, on the rights of natives, ii, 375 *note*
Dreyfus, Alfred, case, ii, 297, 337
Dreyfus, Gustave, ii, 333
Dropmore Papers, ii, 554
Ducie, Julia, Countess of, member of Metropolitan Asylums Board, ii, 17
Duclerc, M., his Ministry, i, 474 *note*, 486; fall of, 534
Dudbrook, Sir C. Dilke at, i, 199, 290
Dudley, Georgina E., 1st Countess of, ii, 557
Dufferin and Ava, Frederick, 1st Marquis of, sent to Syria, i, 205; return from St. Petersburg, 415; on Turkish diplomacy, 474; telegram from, 529; supersedes Malet, 548; at Cairo, 550; report on the prospects of constitutional reconstruction, 551; on advance of Gen. Hicks, ii, 32 *note*; ill-health, 72; interview with Amir of Afghanistan, 115, 116; opinion on *Problems of Greater Britain*, 401 *note*
"Dulcigno demonstration," i, 330, 341
Dumas, Alexandre, *The Three Musketeers*, i, 13; ii, 544
Dumsey Deep, i, 481
Duncombe, Martha, i, 8
Dundee, Trade-Union Congress at, ii, 303
Durand, Rt. Hon. Sir H. M., ii, 116
Duval, General, i, 126

Earle, Mrs. C. W., ii, 91
East, "Bill," ii, 519
Eastern Question, i, 203, 236, 249, 298, 322
Eastwell, ii, 26
Ecréhous Rocks, episode of the, i, 538
Edinburgh, H.R.H. Prince Alfred, Duke of, i, 487; at Majorca, ii, 26
Edinburgh, H.R.H. Duchess of, i, 487; at Eastwell, ii, 26; value of her pearls, 555
Education Bill of 1870, i, 97; the Cowper Temple clause, 97 *note*
Education League, i, 94; its principle, 95, 97

Edward VII., King, illness when Prince of Wales, i, 141; dinner-parties, 266, 520; meeting with Sir C. Dilke, 302; criticism on, 329; German opinion of, 341; on M. Challemel-Lacour's appointment, 353; interest in foreign politics, 392; in Paris, 393, 403; entertains Gambetta, 403; at Berlin, 412; at the Russian Chapel, 414; wish for information from the Foreign Office, 426; on Sir C. Dilke's refusal of Irish Secretaryship, 444; wish to take a military command in Egypt, 473; advice to Sir C. Dilke, 493; political views, 500; character, 500; on Lord Rosebery's claim to be Privy Seal, 522; on allowance for his sons, 523; member of Housing Commission, ii, 16; question of precedence, 16; work on the Commission, 26; on new settlement of Civil List, 101; proposed visit to Dublin, 127; friendliness to Sir C. Dilke, 166, 169, 207; influence on foreign affairs, 501; journeys on Continent, 507; reception at Berlin, 515; death, 526; funeral, 527, 563; indignation at Kaiser's treatment of the Empress Frederick, 561
Eelbrook Common, case of, i, 259
Egypt, administration, i, 326, 476; revolution, 451; policy of Joint Powers, 453, 465; ministerial crisis, 456, 458; conference on, 543; ii, 48, 51; treatment of political prisoners, i, 548; despatch of reinforcements, ii, 38; amount of claims against, 46; the Law of Liquidation, 46; scheme for control by the Powers, 48; guaranteed neutrality, 52, 93, 97; finance, 56-60, 100, 109, 110; diplomatic relations broken with France, 117; occupation of, 252, 255-258 *note*. *See also* Soudan
Egypt, Tewfik, Khedive of, i, 450; ii, 49
Eight Hours Bill, ii, 281
Elcho, Lord, i, 198. *See* Wemyss
Election Expenses Bill, i, 85
Election, General, of 1880, i, 304; of 1886, ii, 180, 194, 224; of 1900, 436; of 1905, 443; of 1910, 526
Electoral Reform Bill, i, 164
Electorate, reform of the, i, 503, 514
Eleusis Club, i, 172
Elgin, Victor, 9th Earl of, Sec. of State for Colonies, ii, 466 *note*
Eliot, George, i, 163; ii, 542
Ellice, Edward, i, 80
Elliot, Hon. Arthur, *Life of Goschen*, i, 317 *note*
Elliott, Sir Charles, member of Council for Public Works, at Quetta, ii, 295
Ellis, Sir Arthur, at Berlin, i, 412
Ellis, Thomas E., ii, 281
Ellison, Colonel G. F., sec. to Esher Committee, ii, 444
El Obeid, siege of, i, 548
Elsom, S. J., ii, 328 *note*
El Teb, ii, 28, 35, 46
Emerson, R. W., i, 60; ii, 542
Emigration, assisted, scheme of, i, 511
Emly, William, 1st Baron, i, 375
Empire Day, ii, 554
Empire Review, article in, ii, 500
Employers' Liability Bill, ii, 349 *note*
Employment of Children Act of 1903, ii, 349
Ems, meeting at, i, 486 *note*
Enclosure Bill, i, 101
Enfida estate, case of, i, 379
Enghien, Duc d', death, ii, 557
England, secret agreement with Russia, i, 254; declares war against Afghanistan, 261; style of conversation in, 283; policy in Afghanistan, 385; negotiations for a treaty of commerce with France, 392-400; joint commission appointed, 393; result of the most-favoured-nation treaty, 400; despatch of a warship to Alexandria, 451; issue of a joint note, 452; relations with France, 530, 538; ii, 47, 80, 261, 476, 483, 498-502; proposed treaty with Portugal, i, 534; division of counties into districts, ii, 66; foreign policy, 251, 262; relations with Italy, 262; with Belgium, 384; unpreparedness for war, 391-395, 397; treaty obligations, 393; relations with Germany, 483, 497, 515; military history, 499; relations with the United States, 504
English Review, articles in, ii, 501 *note*, 506 *note*, 510 *note*
Epirus, proposed colonization of, i, 280
Errington, George, mission to Vatican, i, 374, 428; baronetcy conferred, protests against, ii, 149-151
Escombe, F. J., at Dockett, ii, 318
Esher, Viscounts. *See* Brett
Estournelles de Constant, Baron d', Acting Resident at Tunis, i, 545; fencing, ii, 234; on Siam blockade, 453 *note*

Eugénie, Empress, death of her son, i, 291; statue of, 511
Europe en 1887, ii, 292
European Concert, result, i, 330, 331, 332, 342
Everett, Wm., President of the Camb. Union Society, i, 30
Eversley, Charles, 1st Baron. *See* Lefevre
Exeter, i, 18
Exeter Hall, meeting at, i, 151
Exhibitions, International, i, 7, 23
Explosives Bill, i, 524
Eyre, Governor, suppresses insurrection in Jamaica, i, 52

Factories, inspection of, i, 508
Fadejew, General, *Ueber Russlands Kriegsmacht und Kriegspolitik*, ii, 246
Fafner, the dog, ii, 566
Faidherbe, General, i, 122; condition of his army, 123
Farre, General, Minister of War, i, 402
Farwell, Sir George, ii, 344 *note*
Fashoda incident, ii, 483, 500
Favre, Jules, i, 111
Fawcett, Rt. Hon. Henry, at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, i, 24; political views, 83; member of Radical Club, 100 *note;* republican opinions, 144; defeat at the poll, 173; M.P. for Hackney, 173; use of stratagem, 174; at a meeting at Devonshire House, 200; possession of moral force, 219; appointed Postmaster-General, 314; illness, 494; views on Woman's Suffrage, ii, 7; death, 71 *note;* portrait, 235
Fawcett, Millicent Garrett, letter to Sir C. Dilke, ii, 8 *note*
Fazakerley, J. N., member of Grillion's, ii, 555
Fencing, sport of, i, 481; ii, 233, 316
Fernie, W. J., at Dockett, ii, 318
Ferry, Jules, i, 285; ii, 261; Prime Minister, i, 338, 340, 534; Colonial policy, 534
Field, Kate, correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, i, 194
Fife, Alexander, 1st Duke of, i, 253
Figaro, article in, ii, 498-500
Fiji, labour tax, ii, 372
Financial Review of Reviews, ii, 470
Firth, J. F. B., Liberal candidate for Chelsea, i, 259; ii, 171; elected, i, 303; on Committee of the London Government scheme, 421; political views, ii, 214
Fisher, Admiral Sir John, 1st Baron, member of the Committee on reorganization of War Office, ii, 441
FitzJames, Comte de, i, 402
Fitzmaurice, Edmond, Lord, i, 34; President of Camb. Union Society, 51; political views, 83; at Sloane Street, 160; on Fawcett's return to Parliament, 173; at a meeting at Devonshire House, 200; support of Lord Hartington, 224; member of the Greek Committee, 241; on Sir C. Dilke's appointment of Under-Sec., 310; member of the Commission for Reforms under Treaty of Berlin, 317; *Life of Lord Granville*, 374 *note;* ii, 99 *note;* appointed Under-Sec. at Foreign Office, i, 498; ii, 383; member of Commission on reform of Local Government, ii, 11; on evacuation of Soudan, 32; on Central Asian Committee, 88; belief in Sir C. Dilke, 178; opinion of Gladstone, 225; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 249 *note;* proposal for autonomy of Albania, 250; Chairman of the Wiltshire Council, 311 *note;* on administration of Congo, 382 *note; Life of Shelburne*, 488 *note;* letter from Sir C. Dilke, 502
Flaxley Abbey, ii, 329
Flogging in the army, debate on, i, 293; abolished, 297
Flourens, Gustave, i, 125
Flower, Constance (afterwards Lady Battersea), i, 285
Flower, Cyril (afterwards Lord Battersea), i, 285; ii, 212; at Dockett Eddy, ii, 157, 165; belief in Sir C. Dilke, 179; on character of House of Commons, 282
Folkard, Miss, i, 8, 11, 87; death, 358
Fontaine, Arthur, head of French Labour Department, ii, 338, 357, 361; at Zurich, 521
Forest of Dean, ii, 270, 276, 326; elections, 284, 331, 465, 528; Speech House, 276, 328-330
Forman, H. Buxton, ii, 542
Forster, Sir Charles, i, 276
Forster, John, i, 17; ii, 557
Forster, Rt. Hon. W. E., Vice-President of the Council of Education, i, 81; political views, 82; Education Bill of 1870, 97; M.P. for Bradford, 179; support of Lord Hartington, 224; friendship with the Duchess of Manchester, 268; Chief Sec. for

Ireland, 306; Coercion Bill, 315, 345, 346, 363, 369; Protection of Property measure, 365; resignation, 438, 439; views against sending Zebehr to Khartoum, ii, 42
Fortescue, Chichester. *See* Carlingford
Fortnightly Review, articles in the, ii, 245, 391, 476 *note*, 482 *note*
Fottrell, Mr., acts as intermediary between the Castle and Parnell, ii, 140, 157 *note*
Fouquet, Nicolas, house and garden, ii, 292, 307, 335
Fourth Party, i, 336 *note;* alliance with Parnell, 244 *note;* members, 267
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Henry (afterwards Viscount Wolverhampton), ii, 219; President of the Local Government Board, 271 *note;* member of Cabinet, 467 *note*
Français, François Louis, ii, 333
France, result of elections in 1871, i, 124; relations with Germany, 133; ii, 245; war scare of 1875, i, 188; proposed mediation between Turkey and Greece, 299; on coercion of Turkey, 332, 334; policy in Tunis, 334, 379, 394, 450; revision of commercial policy, 350; character of administration, 355; conflict with the Kroumirs, 381; negotiations for a treaty of commerce with England, 392-400; Joint Commission appointed, 393; Foreign Office, 396; most-favoured-nation treaty with England, 400; despatch of a warship to Alexandria, 451; issue of a joint note, 452; policy in Egypt, 458; relations with England, 530, 538; ii, 47, 80, 261, 476, 483, 498-502; claims in Madagascar, i, 538; rights of fishery, 538 *note;* bombardment of Tamatave, 540; proposed international Commission on Egyptian finance, ii, 100; diplomatic relations broken with Egypt, 117; army manœuvres, 297-300; Minimum Wage Act, 362; expenditure on defence, 405; treaty of alliance with Russia, 476; financial scandals, 476; foreign policy, 476; relations with Italy, 476; protectorate over Madagascar, 478; aggressive action in Siam, 483, 486; concessions to, 485; policy in China, 486; condition of army, 507; durability of the Third Republic, 553; Foreign Legion, 562
France, Anatole, ii, 545; *Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque*, 325; *Penguins*, 566
Franchise, extension of the, i, 514; ii, 22; postponement, i, 517; Bill, ii, 4, 68, 469; rejected by House of Lords, 63; demonstration in favour, 65
Francis Ferdinand, Archduke, marries Sophie, Countess Chotek, i, 119
Franco-Canadian Treaty, i, 400
Franco-German War of 1870, i, 102; ii, 160; origin, i, 133, 157, 269, 484-486; ii, 306; trophies, ii, 231
Franco-Italian agreement, ii, 506
Franco-Spanish agreement, ii, 506
Frankfort Treaty, i, 405
Franqueville, Mdme. de, ii, 335
Franqueville, Comte de, ii, 241, 335; *Le Gouvernement et le Parlement Britanniques*, i, 127 *note*
Freake, C. F., candidate for Chelsea, i, 78
Frederick, Emperor. *See* Germany, Crown Prince of
Frederick, Empress. *See* Germany, Crown Princess of
Free Trade policy, revision, ii, 458
Freiheit, prosecution of the, i, 386
Fréjus, i, 484; ii, 525; picture of, 236
Frere, Sir Bartle, High Commissioner in South Africa, demand for the abolition of Zulu military system, i, 271; recall demanded, 318; character of his policy, 319; result of his retention, 319
Freycinet, M. de, character, i, 286; resigns, 338; again succeeds to office, 433 *note;* policy in Egypt, 456; criticism on, 461; defeat of his Ministry, 474
Freytag, Gustav, i, 108
Friedjung, Heinrich, *Der Krimkrieg und die Österreichische Politik*, ii, 251 *note*
Friedland, despatched to Tunis, i, 380
Friedrichsruh, ii, 303-306
Friendly Societies Bill, i, 180
Friston Place, i, 16
Froude, J. A., result of mission to South Africa, i, 271
Fulham, deputation from, ii, 272

Galitzin, Princess, i, 92
Galliffet, Marquis de, i, 403; ii, 297, 299, 300, 339
Galt, Sir A., i, 400
Gambetta, Léon, i, 111; oratory, 123; friendship with Sir C. Dilke, 153, 156, 159; geniality and patriotism,

154; speech describing December 2nd, 155; sympathy for Sir C. Dilke on his first wife's death, 182; reception of Mr. Morley, 185; introduction to Lord R. Churchill, 187; meets Sir W. Harcourt, 225; secretaries, 226; portrait, ii, 232, 501 *note;* President of the Chamber, i, 270; characteristics, 286, 513; congratulations on Sir C. Dilke's appointment as Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, 312; on Greek question, 324; the coercion of Turkey, 332, 334; Cherbourg speech, 333 *note;* views against the policy in Tunis, 380; on extradition treaty with Russia, 388; interview with Sir C. Dilke, 393, 395; Ministry, 398; prejudices against, 402; meeting with Prince of Wales, 403; refuses to meet Galliffet, 403; autograph, 404; character of his Ministry, 406 *note;* relations with the Senate, 406 *note;* Minister for Foreign Affairs, 407; limitation of his power, 408; adoption of *scrutin de liste*, 408; Ministry overthrown, 433, 456; visit to England, 434; unpopularity in France, 434; Prime Minister, 451; policy of annexation in Egypt, 453; hatred of Russia, 454 *note;* ii, 477 *note;* opinion of Duclerc, i, 486; death, 513; foreign policy, ii, 506 *note*. Letters to Sir C. Dilke, i, 182, 187, 290, 312, 324, 402, 404, 434

Game Laws, amendment, i, 77

Gardeners' Chronicle, i, 7

Garibaldi, Ricciotti, i, 128, 160

Gavard, Charles, Reminiscences of, i, 174; at Chelsea Town Hall, 174; dinner-party, 227

Gennadius, M., friendship with Sir C. Dilke, i, 200; implores him to accept the Under-Secretaryship for Foreign Affairs, 313; at Dockett, ii, 318

George IV., King, anecdote of, ii, 557

George, Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd, ii, 328 *note;* at Dockett, 317; interview with Sir C. Dilke, 459; member of Cabinet, 467 *note*

Gérard, Auguste, *The Society of Berlin*, i, 225; appointed private sec. to Gambetta, 226

Germain, Henri, ii, 332; Director of Crédit Lyonnais, 487

Germany, war with France, i, 102, 104; relations with France, 133; ii, 497; war scare of 1875, i, 188; proposed cession of Cameroons to, 431; colonial policy, 534; seizes the Cameroons, ii, 83; despatch of warships to Samoa, 96; negotiations on colonial questions, 99 *note;* alliance with Austria-Hungary, 245; with Italy, 246; foreign policy, 247, 477; increase of the army, 399; expenditure on defence, 405; preparations for war, 406, 438; Triple Alliance, 477, 491; Heligoland ceded to, 478; relations with England, 483, 515; with Russia, 491; naval Bills, 496

Germany, Crown Prince of (afterwards Emperor Frederick), characteristics, i, 413; relations with Bismarck, 432

Germany, Crown Princess of (afterwards Empress Frederick), i, 341; her meeting with Sir C. Dilke, 413; her treatment by Kaiser William II., ii, 561

Gérôme, Léon, ii, 332

Gervais, Admiral, in command of naval squadron at Cronstadt, ii, 476

Gibson, Edward (afterwards Baron Ashbourne), i, 487; appointed Lord Chancellor of Ireland, ii, 150

Gibson, Rt. Hon. Thomas Milner, i, 17; at Paris, 153

Giers, M. de, Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, i, 262

Gifford, William, editor of the *Quarterly Review*, opinion of Mr. Dilke, i, 4

Gilpin, Mr., Governor of Colorado, i, 63

Girardin, Émile de, i, 55

Gladstone, Catherine, i, 440; ii, 148

Gladstone, Dorothy M., Viscountess, ii, 548 *note*

Gladstone, Herbert, 1st Viscount, ii, 146, 196 *note*, 548 *note*

Gladstone, Rt. Hon. W. E., M.P. for Greenwich, i, 80; political views, 82; ii, 185, 190, 198, 204, 208; on Black Sea Treaty, i, 121; reply to Sir C. Dilke's speech, 149; wish to resign, 165, 446, 448, 466, 472, 489-491, 519; ii, 95, 133; resignation, i, 171; ii, 416, 457; pamphlet on Turkey, i, 207, 211; opposes intervention in the East, 216; possession of moral force, 218, 219; series of resolutions, 220; sudden change of policy, 221; list of supporters, 223; windows wrecked by the mob, 249; denounces the Afghan war, 262;

style of his conversation, 283; habit of play-acting, 284; Prime Minister, 306; interviews with Sir C. Dilke, 309; ii, 110, 256; retains Sir B. Frere in South Africa, i, 319; on reduction of wine duties, 350; views on procedure, 370; on Errington Mission, 375; opinion of Sir C. Dilke's speeches, 385, 473; decision on North Borneo Concession, 389; on commercial treaty with France, 398; on Panama Canal, 409; characteristics, 409; on proposed expulsion of Bradlaugh, 422; on Royal Grants question, 426; negotiations with Parnell, 444; proposed Committee of Enquiry on Civil List expenditure, 449; speech on Egypt, 460, 476; on Alexandria massacres, 468; friendship with Mdme. O. Novikof, 487; his Committee on Kilmainham Treaty, 489; estimate of Sir C. Dilke, 491; proposes to appoint Chamberlain Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, 493; on characteristics of Queen Victoria, 497; on Privy Councillor's oath, 499; on reform in local government, 509; at Cannes, 514; on police force, 514, 523; on an Irish Local Government Bill, 518; interview with M. Clemenceau, 519; Radical views, 519; return to London, 521; opinion of Lord Rosebery, 522; conflict with Harcourt, 524; views on Chamberlain's speech at Birmingham, 526; ii, 69; opposes the removal of the Duke of Wellington's statue, i, 528; on extension of franchise, ii, 2; attempts to mediate between Hartington and Chamberlain, 4; views on Woman's Suffrage, 7; on the Local Government Bill, 13; on Gordon's mission to Khartoum, 34; in favour of sending Zebehr to Khartoum, 42, 60; illness, 42, 45, 282; at Coombe Warren, 43, 45; against expedition to the Soudan, 48; objections to telling Parliament, 51; lines on, 51; postpones neutralization of Egypt, 53; opposes an expedition to relieve Gordon, 53, 54, 60; at Dalmeny, 58; criticism on, 62, 207, 225; proposed extinction of Lord Mayor's banquet, 63; views on Redistribution, 64, 67, 74, 78, 102; memorandum, 76; Conservatism, 78; opposition to the annexations in the Kilimanjaro district, 83; increase of naval expenditure, 86, 112; habit of answering questions without notice, 118, 207; on the proposed secession of Sir C. Dilke, 119; on a vote of credit, 120; on arbitration with Russia, 121; Land Purchase Bill, 134, 211; on Budget Bill, 144; eulogy on, 146; confers Baronetcy on Errington, 149-151; method of dealing with Parnell, 155; uncertainty of his future course of action, 164; congratulations to Sir C. Dilke on his engagement, 170; Home Rule policy, 171, 194, 196, 213; attitude towards Sir C. Dilke, 172; appeal to his Radical colleagues, 181; manifesto, 184; interview with Chamberlain, 190; treatment of him, 205, 206; third administration, 207; messages from the Sultan of Turkey, 269; relations with Chamberlain, 269; wish that Sir C. Dilke should return to Parliament, 273; hatred of Socialism, 289; on National Defence, 457; anecdote of, 548; recollections of, 569. Letters: to J. Chamberlain, ii, 135, 185, 187, 198; to Sir C. Dilke, 7, 76, 83, 102, 119, 136, 151, 158, 172, 206, 269; to Lord Hartington, 196, 208; to Lord Northbrook, 53

Gladstone, Life of, i, 206 *note*, 221 *note*, 367 *note*, 471, 526 *note*; ii, 31 *note*, 42 *note*, 120 *note*, 196 *note*, 224 *note*

Glatton, the, i, 235

Globe, the, reveals secret agreement with Russia, i, 254

Glyn, George, chief Liberal Whip (afterwards 2nd Baron Wolverton), i, 87, 98, 174, 306

Goa, treaty, i, 418

Goderich, Frederick J., Viscount, Prime Minister, ii, 494

Godwin, George, member of Housing Commission, ii, 16 *note*

Goertz, Count, i, 104

Goltz, K. von der, ii, 438

Gomul Pass, ii, 296

Gordon, Sir Arthur, labour tax for natives, i, 536

Gordon, General, i, 326; mission to Soudan, 557; ii, 29-35; proclamations, 30, 34, 38; at Khartoum, 34; wish to have Zebehr sent, 35, 38, 41; letter to King of the Belgians, 36; appointed Governor-General of the Soudan, 36; meeting with Zebehr, 36, 39; instructions, 36; proclamation on slavery, 38, 39;

charge against Baring, 40; change of policy, 40; amount of his provisions, 45; debate on, in Parliament, 50; telegram from, 61; letter from Lord Northbrook, 61; last communications with, 62
Gordon, Rachel, Lady Hamilton, i, 199, 241
Gordon, Sir Henry, ii, 224
Gordon, Osborne, ii, 567
Gore, Dr. C., Bishop of Birmingham (now of Oxford), ii, 560; tribute to Sir C. Dilke, 342, 363
Gorst, Sir John, i, 98; on alliance between the Fourth Party and Parnell, 244 *note*; member of the Fourth Party, 267, 336 *note*; belief in Sir C. Dilke, ii, 179; on Congo atrocities, 381; frankness, 565; political views, 565
Gortschakof, Prince, i, 103, 115; at the Berlin Congress, 264
Goschen, George J., 1st Viscount, i, 179; at a meeting at Devonshire House, 200; Ambassador at Constantinople, 314, 316, 323; on proposed union between Greece and Albania, 328; return from Constantinople, 378; appointed Chancellor of Exchequer, 445; use of patronage at Local Government Board, 504; reason for refusing the Speakership, ii, 10; member of Commission on Housing, 16 *note*; Special Ambassador to the Porte, 250; First Lord of Admiralty, 423; administration of navy, 438; speeches at Union Society, 564
Goschen, Life of, i, 317 *note*, 328 *note*, 342 *note*; ii, 250, 493 *note*
Gower, Lord Ronald, i, 107
Graham, R. B. Cunninghame, at Dockett, ii, 317
Graham, General Sir Gerald, in command of expedition to Suakim, ii, 40; defeats the Arabs, 41
Gramont, Duc de, i, 158
Grande Revue, article in, ii, 502 *note*
Grant, Charles, ii, 241
Grant Duff, Anna J., Lady, ii, 91
Grant Duff, Sir Mountstuart E., i, 266; Under-Secretary of State for India, 83, 309 *note*; support of Lord Hartington, 223; opinion of Herbert, 288; Governor of Madras, 373, 419; correspondence with Sir C. Dilke, 419, 443; ii, 138; views on his refusal of the Chief Secretaryship for Ireland, i, 444; proposed peerage, ii, 147
Grant, General Ulysses S., visit to London, i, 228
Granville, Granville George, 2nd Earl, i, 53, 79; political views, 83; on situation in Russia, 115; loyalty to Lord Hartington, 218; at Strawberry Hill, 240; habit of substitution of words, 246, 486; breakfast parties, 266; at Mentmore, 273; style of his conversation, 283; appointed Sec. of State for Foreign Affairs, 306; relations with Sir C. Dilke, 311, 428, 496; ii, 163; policy during the war of 1870, i, 313; despatch to Turkey, 322; compliment to Sir C. Dilke, 336; opinion of his speech on Kandahar, 385; on right of asylum, 387; on North Borneo Concession, 389; ill-health, 391; on commercial treaty with France, 397; Royal Grants question, 423; on Sir C. Dilke's refusal of Irish Secretaryship, 442; policy on Egypt, 452, 455, 457, 469, 548; telegrams to Lord Ampthill, 461; change in the words, 462; on threats to resign office, 463; on Local Government Bill, 517; at Marlborough House, 520; policy in Madagascar, 539-541; at conference on Egypt, 543; opinion of Sir E. Wood, 554; telegrams to Baring, ii, 29; on Gen. Gordon's mission to the Soudan, 31, 48; criticism of Lord Hartington, 54; views against a German protectorate of Angra Pequena, 81; wish to resign, 111; views on Penjdeh, 118; wish to recall Lumsden, 120; on Mrs. Pattison, 168; advice to Sir C. Dilke, 173; saying of, 549. Letters to Sir C. Dilke, i, 246, 311, 335, 340, 423, 544
Granville, Life of, i, 206 *note*, 320 *n.*, 323 *n.*, 331 *n.*, 334 *n.*, 341 *n.*, 342 *n.*, 358 *n.*, 374 *n.*, 407 *n.*, 418 *n.*, 486 *n.*, 529 *n.*, 534 *n.*; ii, 29 *n.*, 31 *n.*, 43 *n.*, 54 *n.*, 62 *n.*, 81 *n.*, 82 *n.*, 85 *n.*, 99 *n.*, 111 *n.*, 120 *n.*, 123 *n.*, 150 *n.*, 161 *n.*, 184 *n.*, 223 *n.*, 402 *n.*, 479 *n.*, 493 *n.*
Granville, Castalia R., 2nd Countess, at Strawberry Hill, i, 240; Mentmore, 273; accident, 463; at Marlborough House, 520
Gravelotte, battle of, i, 108
Gray, Asa, i, 60; ii, 542, 555
Gray, Edmund Dwyer, member of "New Party," i, 214; member of Housing Commission, ii, 16 *note*, 19, 127; dinner party, 140

Great Britain. *See* England
Greater Britain, i, 60; ii, 342, 368, 537; characteristics, i, 65; extracts from, 66, 68, 69, 72; preface, 67, 68; editions, 69; reviews, 69
Greaves, General, expedition to Suakim, ii, 109
Greece, i, 237; the future of, 203, 278; relations with France, 299; evasive negotiations, 322; proposed union with Albania, 328; ii, 250; frontier question, i, 330, 342 *note*, 378; cession of territory by Turkey, 331; relations with Bulgaria, ii, 269, 293; with Turkey, 293; war with Turkey, 492
Greece, King George of, in London, i, 329; meeting with Sir C. Dilke, 329; ii, 527; at funeral of King Edward VII., ii, 527
Greek Committee, formed, i, 241; meeting, 278
Greenwich, ministerial fish dinner at, i, 371
Grenfell, W. H. *See* Desborough
Grévy, President, resignation, ii, 476
Grey, Albert, ii, 214
Grey, Constance G., Lady de (afterwards Marchioness of Ripon), i, 520; ii, 564
Grey, Sir Edward (now Viscount), as Foreign Secretary, i, 537; ii, 502, 510, 512; on administration of the Congo, ii, 384; member of Cabinet, 467 *note*; reserve, 565
Grey, Sir George, ii, 556
Grey, General, letter to Sir Wentworth Dilke, i, 21
Griffith, W. R., President of the Camb. Univ. Boat Club, i, 50 *note*
Grillion's Club, ii, 25, 165, 555
Grillo, Marq. Capranica del, i, 161
Grimaud, ii, 524
Grosvenor, Lord R. (afterwards Lord Stalbridge), on Sir C. Dilke's admission into the Cabinet, i, 491; on Redistribution, ii, 77
Grosvenor Gallery, exhibition, i, 231
Grote, Harriet, at a meeting of London Society for Woman's Suffrage, i, 99
Groult, Camille, ii, 334
Grousset, Pascal, escape from New Caledonia, i, 190; impertinent reply to President of the Tribunal, 190; appearance, 191 *note*
Guérin, Charles, ii, 545
Guiche, M. de la, ii, 298
Guildhall, meeting at, ii, 361
Guinness, Sir Edward, ii, 142
Guitry, L., the actor, ii, 522
Gurney, Russell, ii, 548
Gyp, pseud. of Gabrielle Riquetti de Mirabeau, Comtesse de Martel de Janville, i, 298

Hackney election, i, 173
Haines, Field-Marshal Sir F. P., i, 263 *note*
Haldane, Robert, 1st Viscount, ii, 344, 365; Sec. of State for War, 444, 465, 466 *note*; army reform, 444; criticism on, 550
Halévy, Ludovic, ii, 338
Halim, Prince, i, 457
Hall, Major Byng, i, 108
Hamerton, P. G., extract from *Landscape*, i, 72
Hamilton, Sir Edward, ii, 54; private sec. to Mr. Gladstone, i, 556 *note*; on strain to him of a personal question, ii, 119; on charge against Sir C. Dilke, 170
Hamilton, Lord George, i, 150; ii, 560; on an increase of the navy, ii, 415
Hamilton, James, Marquis of (afterwards 2nd Duke of Abercorn), i, 520
Hamilton, Lady Mary, ii, 561
Hamilton, Mary A., Marchioness of (afterwards 2nd Duchess of Abercorn), i, 520
Hamilton, Sir Robert, Under-Sec. for Ireland, ii, 139; at Kingstown, 142
Hammersmith, meeting at, i, 179
Hampden (Viscount). *See* Brand, Sir Henry
Hannen, Sir James, President of the Court of Probate and Divorce, ii, 175
Hanotaux, G., i, 400; ii, 261; hostility to England, ii, 483; *La France Contemporaine*, 512 *note*, 513 *note*; *La Politique de l'Équilibre*, 514 *note*, 515 *note*
Harcourt, Elizabeth C., Lady, at Paris, i, 225
Harcourt, George G. Vernon, long Parliamentary experience, ii, 471
Harcourt, Lewis, 1st Viscount, i, 183, 348; at Paris, 225; resemblance to his father, ii, 548
Harcourt, Robert, i, 482
Harcourt, Sir William Vernon, letters to the *Times*, i, 83; on education controversy, 95; at Sloane Street, 160; Solicitor-General, 166; political views, 179; ii, 183, 187; sympathy on the death of

Katherine, Lady Dilke, i, 182; devotion to his son, 186; at meetings at Devonshire House, 200; ii, 203; views on Eastern Question, i, 209, 216; at Paris, 225; at Strawberry Hill, 240; dinner-party, 263; at meeting of the Greek Committee, 278; on political situation, 296; appointed Home Sec., 306; offers Sir C. Dilke the Under-Secretaryship for Colonies, 307; Irish policy, 365, 444, 520; on prosecution of Socialist publications, 386; on right of asylum, 387; London Government scheme, 420; Coercion Bill, 445; in New Forest, 476; work at Home Office, 506; memorandum on police force, 515; threat to resign, 520; ii, 45, 111; conflict with Gladstone, i, 524; Explosives Bill, 524; policy on Egypt, 543, 548; ii, 43, 45; views against an expedition to Soudan, ii, 48; on Egyptian finance, 56, 59, 97; on House of Lords, 72; on charge against Sir C. Dilke, 174; break in friendship with James, 211; on the British army, 406 *note*; death, 547; anecdote of, 548; Local Veto Bill, 566. Letters to Sir C. Dilke, i, 95, 482; ii, 174

Hardie, Keir, i, 467

Hardwick Hall, ii, 103

Hardy, Rt. Hon. Gathorne (afterwards 1st Earl of Cranbrook), i, 179; political views, 83; possession of moral force, 219

Hare, Mr., member of the Radical Club, i, 100 *note*

Hargreaves, Alice P., i, 491

Harnai, ii, 296

Harrington, Sir John, ii, 318

Harrison, Frederic, i, 147, 381; advice to Sir C. Dilke, 305

Harrison, Sir George, member of Housing Commission, ii, 16 *note*, 19

Hartington, Spencer Compton, Marquis of (afterwards 8th Duke of Devonshire), political views, i, 179; ii, 183; leader of Liberal party, i, 196; meetings at Devonshire House, 200; ii, 203; at Constantinople, i, 210; anti-Russian, 217; influence of the Duchess of Manchester on, 217, 222; list of his supporters in 1877, 223; on the Afghan war, 262; attitude on the Greek question, 277; scene with Chamberlain, 293; at Aston Clinton, 302; appointed Sec. of State for India, 306; at Walmer Castle, 337; prejudices, 347; method of dealing with Irish obstruction, 361, 363; foreign policy, 391, 430; views on the Franchise Bill, 449; policy on Egypt, 456, 548; ii, 52, 56, 97; appointed Sec. for War, i, 492; on extension of franchise, 514, 516; ii, 1; views on Ireland, i, 516; on legislative measures, 517; at Marlborough House, 520; opposition to Agricultural Holdings Bill, 525; threat to resign, ii, 3, 117; eulogy on Whigs, 3; relations with Chamberlain, 3, 212; on relief of Gordon, 34; on expedition to Soudan, 48, 60; method of obstruction, 53; criticism on, 54; on compromise with House of Lords, 68; interviews with Sir M. Beach, 71, 72; on Redistribution, 74, 79; on the Central Asian Committee, 88; appearance, 88; unfitted for work on the Redistribution Bill, 101-103; at Hardwick, 103; views on Radicalism, 103; in Ireland, 141; attack of fever, 141; at Waterfoot, 182; refuses to join the Ministry, 205; opposition to Gladstone, 207; opposition to the Home Rule Bill, 213; Commission on army reform, 399, 413; President of Defence Committee, 423. Letter to Sir C. Dilke, 202

Harwood, George, on the riot at Bolton, i, 143 *note*

Haslam, Mr., i, 143

Haslett, Jim, ii, 299, 323, 519

Hatch, Dr. Edwin, belief in Sir C. Dilke, ii, 179

Hatherley, Baron, i, 86 *note*

Hatzfeldt, Count, Ambassador in London, ii, 303

Havelock, Sir Henry, i, 107

Hay, Lord William, at Strawberry Hill, i, 240

Hayashi, Baron, at Dockett, ii, 317

Haynau, Marshal, case of, i, 469

Hayward, Abraham, i, 162, 199, 227, 284

Healy, T. M., views on Land Act, ii, 5; on Redistribution Bill, 124; editor of *United Ireland*, 152 *note*

Healy, Father, Vicar of Bray, ii, 139

Hecht, Henri, i, 265

Hedge, Dr. F. H., i, 60; ii, 542

Heidelberg, i, 108

Heligoland, cession of, i, 536; ii, 161, 261, 478-481

Hellenic Society founded, i, 280

Heneage, Edward, policy for Ireland, ii, 142

Hénin, Prince d', ii, 298
Henley, ii, 165; boat races, i, 38, 45; regatta, ii, 565
Henry, René, *Questions d'Autriche-Hongrie*, ii, 510 *note*, 513 *note*
Herat, proposed cession to Persia, i, 320; boundary, ii, 121
Herbert, Alan, at siege of Paris, i, 123, 130
Herbert, Auberon, i, 104, 288; at Versailles, 123; avowal of Republican principles, 149; on Eastern Question, 209; anarchic views, 287; opinion of Sir C. Dilke's policy, 476
Herbert, Sir Robert, of the Colonial Office, i, 288
Hereford, Dr. John Percival, Bishop of, belief in Sir C. Dilke, ii, 179; on Tariff Reform, 459
Herschell, Farrer, 1st Baron, character of his opinions as law officer, i, 554; refuses Speakership, ii, 10
Hertslet, Sir Edward, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, i, 342 *note*; memorandum on French right of fishery in Ireland, 538 *note*; *The Map of Africa by Treaty*, ii, 484 *note*
Hervieu, Paul, ii, 333
Herzen, Alexander, ii, 542; leader of moderate Russian revolutionists, i, 91
Hewett, Admiral Sir W. N. W., ii, 38
Hibbert, Sir J. T., Under-Sec. to Local Government Board, i, 507; to Home Office, 508; Financial Sec. to the Treasury, i, 508 *note*
Hicks, General W., military operations in Soudan, i, 552; defeat of, 555; ii, 28, 32
Highbury, Chamberlain's residence, ii, 168, 194
Hill, Frank, i, 433 *note*; ii, 159, 189; editor of the *Daily News*, i, 100 *note*, 316; member of Radical Club, 100 *note*
Hill, Mrs. Frank, i, 199
Hill, Octavia, proposed member of Housing Commission, ii, 17
Hills, J. W., on Sir C. Dilke's interest in Labour questions, ii, 357-359; on characteristics of Sir C. Dilke, 518
Hinde, Captain S. L., publication of book on the Congo, ii, 380
History of the Nineteenth Century, ii, 537
History of Prevalent Opinions in Politics, i, 56
Hoare, Sir Henry, candidate for Chelsea, i, 78
Hohenlohe, Prince, foreign policy, ii, 483, 488
Holker, Sir John, i, 197
Holl, Frank, portrait of J. Chamberlain, ii, 146, 235
Holland, Queen of, at Paris, i, 103
Holland, Bernard, *Life of the Duke of Devonshire*, ii, 4, 98 *note*
Holland, Mary A., 4th Lady, character, i, 199
Holland, T. Erskine, *The European Concert in the Eastern Question*, i, 255 *note*, 317 *note*, 383 *note*
Holland House, i, 199
Holme, Christopher, i, 15
Holmes, Oliver Wendell, i, 60; ii, 542, 555
Holzmann, M., secretary to Princess of Wales, i, 500
Home Office administration, ii, 353-355
Home Rule Bill of 1886, ii, 213-222; defeated, 224; of 1893, rejected by Lords, 290
Hood, Thomas, i, 5
Hope, Beresford, i, 283; ii, 555
Hope, Henry, ii, 555
Hope, Lady Mildred, ii, 555
Hopetoun, Etheldred, Lady, i, 199
Horsman, Edward, i, 122
Horton, Wilmot, member of Grillion's, ii, 555
Houghton, Richard Monckton, 1st Baron, i, 88, 160, 199; anecdotes, 230; story of, 231; style of his conversation, 283; breakfast parties, 305; at Vichy, 334, 344; interview with Moltke, 338; letter to Sir C. Dilke, ii, 543
Hours of work, limitation of, ii, 278
Housing of the Poor, Commission on, i, 511; ii, 15, 16, 20, 126, 164, 166, 277; in Ireland, ii, 127; Scotland, 127
How, Bp. Walsham, member of Housing Commission, ii, 16 *note*
Howard, Cardinal, i, 375
Howard, Charles, i, 266
Howard de Walden, T. E., 8th Lord, fencing, ii, 234
Howell, B. H., at Dockett, ii, 318
Hoxton, artisans' dwellings at, ii, 164
Hudson, H. K., sec. to Sir C. Dilke, ii, 288 *note*, 312 *note*, 324 *note*, 326, 466, 521, 528, 531
Huehne, German Military Attaché, ii, 297
Hughes, Mr. and Mrs. Tom, at Strawberry Hill, i, 240
Hugo, Victor, ii, 545; *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*, i, 56

Huxley, Prof. T. H., i, 487
Hyères, ii, 523, 529
Hyndman, H. M., ii, 502

Ibrahim Pasha, i, 475
Iddesleigh, Stafford, Earl of. *See* Northcote
Ilkeston, meeting at, ii, 280
Imperial, Prince (Eugène L. J. J.), death, i, 291
Imperial Defence, ii, 406-411, 452, 537
Income tax, increase of, ii, 118; reform, 472-474
Indentured and Forced Labour, paper on, ii, 376
Independent Labour Party, ii, 566
Independent Review, article in, ii, 344
India, Council of, i, 385; defence of the N.-W. Frontier, ii, 116, 122, 400-402, 503; administration, 368-370; long-service army for defence, 390, 392
Industrial Remuneration Conference, ii, 21, 278
Inflexible, the, i, 235
Inglis, Sir Robert, member of Grillion's, ii, 555
Ingogo River, defeat at, i, 366
International Law, ii, 537
Inverurie, Lord (afterwards 9th Earl of Kintore), i, 303
Ireland, administration, i, 75, 195; University Bill, 165, 294; Peace Preservation Bill of 1873, 169; condition, 343, 362; result of coercion, 436; Nationalist movement, 520 *note*; extension of franchise, ii, 2; representation, 67; Housing Commission in, 127; Local Government scheme, 129-132; Land Purchase Bill, 132, 133 *note*; proposed abolition of "Dublin Castle," 148 *note*; Home Rule policy, 148 *note*, 189 *note*; policy for settlement, 199-202, 208; Home Rule Bill, 1886, 213-222, 224; National Councils scheme, 265; Home Rule Bill, 1893, 290
Irish members of Parliament, method of obstruction, i, 234, 361, 363; expulsion from House of Commons, 361, 363; suspension, 447 *note*
Irving, Sir Henry, i, 200, 289
Isabella II., Queen of Spain, dethroned, i, 189 *note*
Isandhlwana, disaster at, i, 271, 298
Ismail, ex-Khedive, lapses of memory, i, 487; in London, 545; interview with Sir C. Dilke, ii, 49; habit of substituting words, 49
Issy, i, 126
Isvolski, M., ii, 512, 515
Italy, refusal to intervene in Egypt, i, 471, 477-480; attempt to occupy New Guinea, 536; alliance with Germany, ii, 246; relations with England, 262; with France, 476; Triple Alliance, 477; foreign policy, 509, 514
Ivrea, ii, 522

Jackson, A. M. T., murdered, ii, 370
Jackson, Dr. John, Bishop of London, i, 152
Jacobini, Card., i, 375
Jacottet, Rev. Mr., ii, 375 *note*
James, Sir Henry (afterwards Lord James of Hereford), i, 136, 160; ii, 344, 365; appointed Attorney-General, i, 166; support of Lord Hartington, 224; member of Liberal Central Association, 233; at Strawberry Hill, 240; opinion of Sir W. Harcourt, 307; character of his opinions as law officer, 554; refuses appointment as Speaker, ii, 9; defence of Sir C. Dilke, 166, 173; political views, 182; break in his friendship with Sir W. Harcourt, 211
James, Sir Walter (afterwards Lord Northbourne), i, 284
Jameson Raid, ii, 489, 495, 496
Japan, i, 194; war with China, ii, 489; agreement with Russia, 506
Japanese, patriotism of, ii, 553
Jaurès, Jean, ii, 339
Java, i, 195
Jebb, Sir Richard, ii, 550; characteristics, 551
Jenkins, Edward, i, 262
Jerome, King, i, 20
Jersey, oyster fishery, reservation, i, 538 *note*
Jervoise, Sir H. S. C. C., i, 374 *note*
Jeune, Sir Francis, on Sir C. Dilke's trial, ii, 178; belief in him, 179; at Sloane Street, 308
Jews, types of, ii, 564
Joachim, J., playing, i, 232
Johnston, Sir Harry, *A History of the Colonization of Africa by Alien Races*, ii, 84 *note*, 85 *note*
Johore, Maharajah of, dines with Sir C. Dilke, i, 266
Joinville, Prince de, i, 265; ii, 336
Jomini, Baron, i, 90, 117
Jones, Mrs. Inwood, i, 241
Jowett, Prof. B., ii, 559
Joyce, Miles, hanged, ii, 139
Jusserand, J. J., ii, 340

Kabul, Russian Mission at, i, 261
Kalakaua, King of the Cannibal Islands, in London, i, 415
Kallay, B. von, ii, 251; administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 477
Kalnoky, Count, ii, 248
Kandahar, retirement from, i, 336; retention, 337, 339; evacuation, 385, 533
Karachi, ii, 294
Karolyi, Count, on Austrian policy, i, 331
Katkof, M. N., characteristics, i, 117
Kaufmann, General, massacres in Turkestan, i, 213
Kazan, i, 92
Kean, Charles, i, 13
Keats, John, i, 5; ii, 542-544, 567; relics of, ii, 235, 544; portraits, 238, 543; love-letters, 543
Kennedy, Sir C. M., i, 400; Commissioner for treaty between France and England, 393
Kennedy, Henry George, i, 359; case of, 503
Kenrick, W., ii, 215
Kensington, William, 4th Baron, i, 233
Key, Admiral Sir Cooper, at conference on Egypt, i, 543; paper on expedition to Khartoum, ii, 53
Khartoum, withdrawal from, ii, 29-35; two routes to, 43; expedition to, 44, 45, 53, 60; fall of, 62, 108, 115, 556
Khayyám, Omar, parodied, *The Rubaiyat of a Persian Kitten*, ii, 567
Khojak tunnel, construction of, ii, 122, 295
Khorassan, mission to, i, 533 *note*
Kiang-Hung Convention, ii, 486
Kilimanjaro district, ii, 83; treaties, 84 *note*
Killanin, Lord. *See* Morris
Kilmainham Treaty, i, 437, 488; criticism on, 489; Committee on, 489
Kimberley, John, 1st Earl of, Colonial Secretary, i, 306; character, 391; decision on Franco-Canadian treaty, 400; refuses annexation of Cameroons, 431; on extension of the franchise, 518; member of Commission on reform of Local Government, ii, 11; views against expedition to the Soudan, 48; on the guaranteed neutrality of Egypt, 52; on the Redistribution Bill, 66; foreign policy, 483; on relations with Austria-Hungary, 509 *note*
King, Minnie, afterwards Marchioness of Anglesey, i, 190
Kinglake, A. W. ("Eothen"), *A Biographical Study*, extract from, i, 147 *note*; at Sloane Street, 160; imaginary case of a "nuncupative" death-bed will, 521
Kinglake, Robert A., President of Camb. Univ. Boat Club, i, 50 *note*
Kinross, Baron. *See* Balfour, J. B.
Kinsky, Countess, i, 119
Kintore, Algernon H. T., 9th Earl of, i, 303
Kipling, Rudyard, ii, 540
Kirk, Sir John, ii, 138, 481
Kirkup, Seymour S., "Baron," British Consul at Florence, i, 6
Kitchener, Horatio H., Earl, in South Africa, ii, 436
Klaszco, J., *The Two Chancellors*, i, 157
Knatchbull-Hugessen, Edward (afterwards Lord Brabourne), i, 344
Knight, Gally, member of Grillion's, ii, 555
Knight, Joseph, i, 229; editor of *Notes and Queries*, 230
Knollys, Francis (afterwards Viscount), i, 404, 426, 427; ii, 526
Letter to Sir C. Dilke, i, 494
Knowles, Sir J. T., i, 214
Knowsley, i, 279
Knutsford, Henry, 1st Lord, ii, 564
Koh-i-noor diamond, ii, 555
Komaroff, General, attack on Penjdeh, ii, 117 *note*
Kotchubey, Princess, i, 92
Kroumirs, conflict with, i, 381
Kruger, President, negotiations on the Transvaal question, i, 366; Conference at Bloemfontein, ii, 430

Labori, Fernand, ii, 337, 502 *note*
Labouchere, Henry, ii, 214, 218, 219, 264, 464; at Paris, i, 109; views on Egypt, 470, 546; characteristics, ii, 220; on reform of the House of Lords, 274
Laboulaye, Paul, ii, 332
Labour, Ministry of, views against the proposed, ii, 286; party, in Parliament, 346, 467; questions, views on, i, 76
La Ferronnays, Marquis and Marquise de, at York House, i, 285, 291
Laffitte, P., "Comtist Pope," views on the expedition to Tunis, i, 381
Laghouat, i, 183
Laing's Nek, defeat at, i, 366
Lamb, Charles, i, 5; ii, 536

Lambert, Rt. Hon. Sir John, memoranda on Redistribution Bill, ii, 64; Privy Councillor, 125; friendship with Sir C. Dilke, 125 *note*
La Moutte, ii, 333, 523
Lancashire, single-member district, ii, 66
Land Bill, Irish, W. E. Forster's, 1880, i, 344, 360, 363, 370-372; amendments in House of Lords, 371; result of, ii, 5
Land Purchase, Ireland, Bill, 1885, ii, 132, 133 *note*, 215, 220
Land Tenure Association, meeting, i, 100
Landells, R. T., at Nancy, i, 107
Lansdowne, Henry, 5th Marquis of, criticism of Conservative policy, i, 273, 274; at the Greek Committee meeting, 278; resignation, 344; Governor of Canada, 523; Secretary of State for War, ii, 423; on an increase of the army, 427
Lansdowne, Maud E., Marchioness of, i, 288
Latham, "Ben," Vice-Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, i, 24; anecdotes of, ii, 559
Lau, Marquis du, ii, 298
Laumont, Baron de, ii, 337
Laumont, Baronne de, ii, 336
Lavandou, i, 483; ii, 524
Laveleye, Émile de, i, 160
Lavisse, E., dialogue with Sir C. Dilke, ii, 487
Law, Rt. Hon. A. Bonar, ii, 458
Law, Hugh, ii, 549
Lawes, C. B., i, 50 *note*
Law Officers of the Crown, the questions submitted to them, i, 553 554
Lawson, Edward Levy (afterwards Lord Burnham), i, 232; ii, 133
Lawson, Harry, 2nd Lord Burnham, ii, 308
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, i, 145; temperance verses, 146 *note*; on the Civil List expenditure, 150; support of Lord Hartington, 223; amendment against calling out reserves, 251; lines on Lord Salisbury, 262; denounces naval demonstration against Turkey, 336
Layard, G. S., *Life and Letters of Shirley Brooks*, extract from, i, 145 *note*
Layard, Sir Henry, Ambassador to Constantinople, i, 208; recall demanded, 316, 318
Leavenworth, Kansas, i, 61
Leavesden, asylum at, ii, 24
Lebanon, massacres in the, i, 205
Lecomte, General, i, 128 *note*
Ledru-Rollin, A. A., the republican, funeral, i, 188
Lee, Sir Henry Austin, secretary to Sir C. Dilke at the Foreign Office, i, 359, 399; at a breakfast given to the Prince of Wales, 403; secretary to Lord E. Fitzmaurice, 499 *note*; to Mr. Bryce, ii, 207
Leeds, meeting at, i, 141
Lefevre, Rt. Hon. George Shaw (afterwards Lord Eversley), i, 88, 266; member of the Commons Preservation Society, 101; treasurer of the Greek Committee, 241, 278; appointed Postmaster-General, ii, 64 *note*; refuses Chief Secretaryship of Ireland, 71 *note*; member of Cabinet, 109, 111 *note*; resignation, 135; views against Coercion Bill, 140
Léger, Louis, *Histoire de l'Autriche-Hongrie*, ii, 247 *note*; *Études Slaves: L'Autriche-Hongrie et la Question d'Orient*, 251 *note*
Legge, Henry, ii, 563
Legros, Prof. A., portrait of Gambetta, ii, 232
Lehmann, R. C., fencing, ii, 233
Leighton, Frederic, Lord, i, 291; at Marlborough House, 520
Leland, C. G. (Hans Breitmann), i, 160
Leopold II., King of the Belgians, i, 273; letter from Gordon, ii, 36; proposed sale of the Congo, 84; its administration, 382; death, 384; criticism on, 549
Leopold, H.R.H. Prince. *See* Albany
Le Play, F., work on economics, i, 55
Lépine, L. J. B., Prefect of Police, ii, 339
Lessar, M., ii, 118
Lesseps, Vicomte de, at Cobden Club dinner, i, 464; want of truth, 466; report on the views of the Khedive, 466; scheme for widening the Suez Canal, 553
Lévy, M., claim to the estate of Enfida, i, 379
Liberal Central Association, i, 233
Liberal party, disorganization, i, 186, 211, 239; leadership, 186; ii, 282; lists of supporters of Mr. Gladstone and of Lord Hartington, i, 223
Linton, Eliza Lynn, i, 199, 289; ii, 542
Liquidation, Law of, ii, 46; Conference on, 48, 51

Liverpool Reform Club, i, 279
Llanos, Frances Mary, ii, 542
Lloyd, Clifford, i, 556; ii, 50
Lobengula, the Matabele king, ii, 302
Local Government, reform of, i, 420, 503, 514; Bill, 518, 527; ii, 265, 271; members of Committee on, ii, 11-14
Local Government Board, Sir C. Dilke appointed President, i, 495; system of patronage, 503; result of reorganization, 505; women inspectors, 508; ii, 353; dynamite explosion at, i, 521
Local Veto Bill, ii, 566
Locker-Lampson, Frederick, ii, 544
Loire, the, scenery of, i, 58
London, Conferences of, i, 121; ii, 512; dynamite outrages, i, 506; ii, 128; Government Bill, i, 420, 514; ii, 10; postponement, i, 524; Liberal and Radical Council, meeting, ii, 222; Water Companies, proposed purchase of, i, 302 *note*
Longfellow, H. W., i, 60; ii, 542, 555
Longwy, siege of, i, 123
Lonsdale, Constance G., Lady, ii, 564; at Marlborough House, i, 520
Lord Mayor's banquet, proposed extinction, ii, 63
Lords, House of, amendments on Irish Land Bill, i, 371; rejection of Franchise Bill, ii, 63; reform of, 64, 65, 68
Loreburn, Robert T., Earl, Lord Chancellor, ii, 328 *note*, 466 *note*
Lorne, Marquis of (afterwards 9th Duke of Argyll), his marriage with Princess Louise, i, 138; at Windsor, 511; at Eastwell, ii, 26
Lothaire, Major, ii, 380
Lough, Rt. Hon. T., on the cost of the Navy, ii, 438
Louise, H.R.H. Princess, amount of dowry, i, 138; at Eastwell, ii, 26
Lowe, Rt. Hon. Robert (afterwards Lord Sherbrooke), ii, 249; speech on the Representation of the People, i, 52; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 81; proposed tax on matches, 135; at meeting at Devonshire House, 200; failure of memory, 276; maxim, 471
Lowell, J. R., i, 60; ii, 542, 555
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James, on immigration of destitute aliens, ii, 285
Lubbock, Sir John (afterwards Lord Avebury), on Irish obstructive methods, i, 234
Lucy, Sir Henry, on the character of Sir C. Dilke's answers, i, 384 *note*
Lugano, International Association for Labour Legislation at, ii, 521
Lumsden, Sir Peter, chief of Afghan Boundary Commission, ii, 115; despatch on Penjdeh incident, 118; views on recall, 120
Lunéville, i, 104
Luxemburg, neutrality of, ii, 257
Lyall, Sir Alfred, *Life of Dufferin*, extract from, ii, 32 *note*
Lydney, meeting at, ii, 279
Lyons, i, 112; ii, 522
Lyons, Richard, 1st Earl, i, 266, 412; ii, 341; Ambassador in Paris, i, 108, 113, 339; on the Tunis question, 382; disapproval of Egyptian mandatories, 455; character of despatch sent to, 546
Lyons, Lord, Life of, i, 382 *note*
Lytton, Edward, 1st Earl of, Viceroy of India, i, 263; recall demanded, 318; character of policy, 320
Lytton, Victor, 2nd Earl of, tribute to Sir C. Dilke, ii, 355

Maamtrasna murders, ii, 139, 156
"Mabon." *See* Abraham
Macarthur, Mary (now Mrs. W. C. Anderson), secretary of Women's Trade-Union League, ii, 345 *note*; on Sir C. Dilke's work on Labour questions, 365-367
McArthur, W. A., friendship with Sir C. Dilke, ii, 275, 276
M'Carthy, Justin, visits Dilke after Phœnix Park murders, i, 439; letter from Parnell, 441 *note*; on the position of Sir C. Dilke, ii, 180
Macclesfield Chronicle, ii, 492 *note*
McClintock, Adm. Sir Leopold, i, 235
MacColl, Canon Malcolm, ii, 276 *note*
MacColl, Norman, editor of the *Athenæum*, i, 163
Macdonald, J. R., ii, 459
Macgregor, Sir Charles, views on defence of the North-West Frontier, ii, 122
Mackay, Baron, i, 275 *note*
McKenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald, friendship with Sir C. Dilke, ii, 279; M.P. for South Monmouthshire, 289; at Dockett, 318, 328 *note*
Maclaren, Mrs., school at Summerfields, i, 483
Macpherson, Fred, ii, 519
Madagascar, claims of France, i, 538; envoys in London, 539; at Westminster Abbey, 540; French protectorate, ii, 478

Magee, Dr. W. C., Bishop of Peterborough (afterwards Archbishop of York), lines on, i, 146 *note*
Maggiore, Lago, ii, 521
Mahdi, lays siege to El Obeid, i, 548; defeats Egyptian army, 555
Maiwand, i, 336; ii, 296
Majuba, i, 367
Makofsky, Vladimir, picture, i, 92
Malet, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward, on Sir C. Dilke's appointment as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, i, 313; on the revolution in Egypt, 452; demands resignation of the Egyptian Ministry, 458; wish to resign, 548; result of his policy in Egypt, 555, 556; despatch to, ii, 99; at Berlin, 341
Mallet, Sir Bernard, *Life of Lord Northbrook*, extract from, ii, 48 *note*; Registrar-General, 348 *note*, 472; on Sir C. Dilke's work as President of Royal Statistical Society, 364; *British Budgets*, 473 *note*
Mallet, Rt. Hon. Sir Louis, i, 88; Permanent Under-Secretary of State for India, 226; opinion of the India Council, 385; at the conference on Egypt, 543
Malta, Sepoys sent to, i, 252; debate on, 253
Manchester, meeting at, i, 138; ii, 68
Manchester, Louise F. A., 7th Duchess of (afterwards 8th Duchess of Devonshire), influence over Lord Hartington, i, 217, 222; at Strawberry Hill, 240; friendship with Forster, 268; at Marlborough House, 520
Manchester Guardian, article in, ii, 446
Manhood suffrage, ii, 147
Mankowane, chief of Bechuanaland, i, 530, 531
Manners, Lord John (afterwards 7th Duke of Rutland), ii, 124
Manning, Cardinal, i, 152, 181, 267; interviews with Sir C. Dilke, 292; ii, 129-132; meetings on the Water question, i, 302; support of Italian monarchy, 374; on relations between England and Vatican, 376; views on the Closure, 423; on Housing of the Poor, 508; member of Housing Commission, ii, 16; question of precedence, 16; suggested remedies, 19; on Local Government (Ireland) scheme, 129-132; interviews with J. Chamberlain, 130, 131; with Parnell, 130, 132; proposals to Sir C. Dilke, 141; diplomatic methods, 191; letter to Sir C. Dilke, 191; at Sloane Street, 241, 242; letter from Lady Dilke, 293 *note*
Marchand, Major, expedition to Fashoda, ii, 483
Mariage de Mademoiselle Beulemans, performance of, ii, 522
Mario, Giuseppe, i, 91
Marlborough, John, 1st Duke of, victories, ii, 555
Marlborough House, dinners at, i, 520, 523, 538
Marquiset, Comtesse, ii, 336
Marriott, Sir William, ii, 286
Marschall, Baron, ii, 483; foreign policy, 489
Mars la Tour, battle of, i, 108
Martel, L. J., President of Senate, resignation, i, 351
Martin, Félix, i, 484; ii, 524
Martin, Frederick, ii, 330
Martin, John, i, 17
"Marvin Memorandum," i, 254 *note*
Masterman, Rt. Hon. C. F. G., ii, 357; at Dockett, 317
Matabeleland, ii, 301
Matches, proposed tax on, i, 135
Mathews, Charles, i, 13
Matthews, Rt. Hon. Henry, at the trial of Sir C. Dilke, ii, 176
Maugham, F. H., at Dockett, ii, 318
Maurice, Gen. Sir Frederick, essay on Balance of Military Power, ii, 403
Maximilian, Emperor, execution of, i, 103
Maxse, Admiral F. A., ii, 252 *note*
Maxstoke, i, 512
May, Sir Erskine, ii, 71
Mazzini, G., portrait, ii, 238; style of conversation, 542
Mecklenburg, Grand Duke of, i, 107
Mediterranean League, proposed creation, i, 249
Melbourne Argus, ii, 479, 482
Mellor, Mr., i, 143
Melly, G., advice to Sir C. Dilke, i, 84
Menabrea, General, i, 474
Mentmore, i, 273
Merv, i, 532; threatened advance of Russia, 321; proposed surrender, 386
Metaxas, M., at Dockett, ii, 318
Metropolitan Asylums Board, women on the, ii, 17
Metropolitan police force, control of, i, 515; ii, 10

Mexican Republic, representation by England, i, 357
Michelidakis, M., ii, 530
Midleton, W. St. John, 9th Viscount, Under-Secretary of State for War, ii, 423; Secretary for War, 436; vote of censure on insufficient supply of cordite, 423; Army Estimates, 428; character of reforms, 437; failure of his scheme, 440
Miliutine, brothers, i, 116
Mill, James, i, 71 *note*
Mill, John Stuart, influence on Sir C. Dilke, i, 56; opinion of *Greater Britain*, 70; friendship with Sir C. Dilke, 71, 88; ii, 342; member of the Political Economy Club, i, 88; semi-socialist views, 89; member of Radical Club, 100; views on land question, 100, 101 *note*; death, 168
Millerand, M., ii, 338
Mills, Sir Charles, Agent-General for the Cape, ii, 301
Milner, Sir Alfred, 1st Viscount, ii, 355; High Commissioner of South Africa, 430; Conference at Bloemfontein, 430; policy, 496 *note*
Milnes, Monckton. *See* Houghton
Miners, addresses to, ii, 280; Bills, 288, 350 *note*; Conference, 281, 282
Minghetti, Mdme., ii, 297
Miniatures, collection of, ii, 236
Minimum wage, ii, 359, 361, 362 *note*
Ministry of 1880, i, 306; of 1886, ii, 205; of 1895, 423
Minto, Gilbert, 4th Earl of, ii, 551
Minto, William, i, 229
Miribel, General de, ii, 299; Chief of the Staff, i, 407
Mitchell, Robert, i, 153
Mitford, B. Freeman (now Lord Redesdale), i, 232, 291
Mitford, Lady Clementine (now Lady Redesdale), i, 232
Moltke, Count von, on the policy of Russia, i, 338
Monaco, i, 168
Monaco, Prince of, ii, 561
Monck, Berkeley, ii, 329 *note*
Monck, Emilia, ii, 329
Monk Bretton, Lord. *See* Dodson
Montebello, Marquis G. L., secretary to Léon Say, i, 323
Montefiore, Leonard, ii, 565
Montenegro, war with Turkey, i, 207; frontier question, 322, 330, 342 *note*
Montgélas, Comte de, i, 227, 250 *note*
Monthly Review, ii, 503 *note*
Montmédy, railway accident at, i, 123
Montsioa, chief of Bechuanaland, 530, 531
More, Sir Thomas, ii, 315
Moreau, Christophe, ii, 333
Moreau, Gustave, ii, 333
Morel, E. D., on administration of the Congo, ii, 379. 381; *Great Britain and the Congo*, 383 *note*
Moret y Prendergast, Sigismundo, Spanish Minister, i, 160; on the charm of Katherine, Lady Dilke, 181; characteristics, 189
Morgan, Prof. J. H., *War: Its Conduct and Legal Results*, ii, 259 *note*
Morgan, Sydney, Lady, i, 16; miniatures, ii, 236
Morier, Sir Robert, ii, 14, 84, 85 *note*; length of his letters, i, 416; testimonial to Sir C. Dilke, 417; complaint of the Foreign Office, 417; proposed Congo treaty, 418
Morley, Rt. Hon. Arnold, ii, 308
Morley, John, Viscount, i, 88, 487; member of Radical Club, 100 *note*; introduction to Gambetta, 185; editor of *Pall Mall Gazette*, 316; views against Lord Spencer's policy, 516; *Life of Gladstone*, 526 *note*; ii, 191 *note*, 328 *note*; political views, ii, 183; criticism on his speeches, 204; on Sir C. Dilke's exclusion from the Ministry, 206; Privy Councillor, 210 *note*; on the evacuation of Egypt, 253, 255; sympathy on the death of Emilia, Lady Dilke, 462; Secretary of State for India, 466 *note*; about Keats, 543
Morley, Samuel, member of the Housing Commission, ii, 16 *note*
Morny, Duc de, appearance, ii, 561
Morny, Duchesse de, afterwards Duchesse de Sesto, i, 190; ii, 561
Morris, M., Chief Justice (afterwards Lord Killanin), ii, 140
Morrison, Walter, member of Radical Club, i, 100 *note*
Moscheles, Felix, portrait of Mazzini ii, 238
Moscow, i, 116
Mouktar Pasha, i, 279
Mulready, William, ii, 227
Mun, Count Albert de, ii, 338
Mundella, Rt. Hon. A. J., i, 136; ii, 286
Municipal Corporations, unreformed, Bill, i, 191, 196, 377, 522
Munkacsy, Michael, picture "Christ," i, 403

Münster, Count, i, 287, 538, 549; views on Sir C. Dilke's speech on massacres at Alexandria, 470; criticism on Bismarck, ii, 99
Müntz, Eugène, ii, 227, 333
Murray, Mr. and Mrs. Douglas, i, 289
Murray, Rt. Hon. Sir G., private secretary to Sir C. Dilke at the Foreign Office, i, 314, 358
Murray, John, presented with Pope's manuscripts, i, 162; ii, 233
Musurus Pasha, i, 461; criticism of the Anglo-Turkish Convention, 327
Muttlebury, S. D., at Dockett, ii, 318
Mzab, i, 183

Napier, Lieut.-Col. the Hon. G. C., memorandum on Penjdeh, i, 532
Napier and Ettrick, Anne J. C., 10th Lady, i, 253
Napier and Ettrick, Francis, 10th Baron, i, 253
Napoleon I., Emperor, anecdote of, ii, 554; at the battle of Waterloo, 559; escape from Elba, 559
Napoleon III., Emperor, i, 102; responsibility for the Franco-German War, 133; story of, 485
Napoleon, Prince Louis, i, 291
National Liberal Club, foundation-stone laid, ii, 72
National Liberal Federation, i, 178, 202
Native races, Conference, ii, 376; defence of, 368; labour question, 369-379
Navy, cost of the, ii, 86, 112, 429, 438, 442; Estimates, 112, 422, 429, 437, 438, 447; increase of the, 415; reserve force, 426
"Navy, The Primacy of the," ii, 407
Nazareth House, case of, i, 506
Nelson, portrait of, ii, 294
Nevill, Lady Dorothy, ii, 194; descent, 561
Newcastle, meeting at, i, 138; system of submarine mines, ii, 447
Newcastle Daily Chronicle, i, 171 *note*
New England, i, 61
Newfoundland fisheries dispute, ii, 285, 487
New Guinea, ii, 94, 99; annexation, i, 156; ii, 82
New Hebrides, history of the, i, 536
Newland Church, ii, 329
New Liberal Review, article in, ii, 435
Newman, Prof. F. W., i, 141; ii, 558
Newman, the cabdriver, ii, 519
Newmarch, William, ii, 554
Newnham, ii, 276; the "Victoria," 330
"New Party," members of the, i, 214
New Romney, case of, i, 192
Newton, Sir Charles, i, 187, 280
Newton, T. W., 2nd Lord, *Life of Lord Lyons*, extract from, i, 382 *note*
New York, i, 61
Niger Chartered Company, ii, 373, 497
Nightingale, Florence, ii, 560
Nigra, Count, on the origin of the Franco-Prussian War, i, 485; at Eastwell, ii, 26; criticism on, 553
Nile, naval expedition by the, ii, 48, 50
Noailles, M. de, proposed Ambassador to London, i, 353
Nolan, Major, political views, i, 282
Nolhac, M. de, ii, 333
Norman, Gen. Sir Henry, at conference on Egypt, i, 543
North American Review, ii, 290 *note*, 316 *note*
Northampton, William, 5th Marquis of, i, 510
North Borneo Company, proposed charter to, i, 388-390; ii, 372, 496
Northbourne, Walter, 1st Lord, i, 284 *note*
Northbrook, Thomas, 1st Earl of, i, 253; Secretary to Admiralty, 306; character of policy, 391; mistake in vote of credit, 472; views on delimitation of Afghan frontiers, 532 *note*; withdraws reward offered for Osman Digna, ii, 43; views on Soudan expedition, 48; objections to Nile route, 50; views on guaranteed neutrality of Egypt, 52; appointed Lord High Commissioner of Egypt, 57; instructions, 57; scheme, 57-59; attack of faintness, 58; at Dalmeny, 58; in Egypt, 59 *note*; letter to Gordon, 61
Northcote, Sir Stafford (afterwards Earl of Iddesleigh), leader of the House of Commons, i, 243 *note*; appellation of "the Goat," 268; vacillating policy, 363; on the Redistribution Bill, ii, 74, 78, 102, 124, 125; on the grouping of Scotch boroughs, 79; congratulations to Sir C. Dilke, 125
Norton, Captain Cecil (now Lord Rathcreedan), ii, 356, 460
Norton, Charles, 1st Baron, dislike of Plimsoll, i, 193, 512
Norton, Charles, 2nd Baron, i, 512
Norton, H. T. J., *England's Guarantee to Belgium and Luxemburg*, ii, 259 *note*

Norton, Julia A. E., 1st Lady, i, 512
Notes and Queries, i, 4; purchase of, 163
Novikof, Mdme. Olga, i, 117, 190, 487
Nowshera, ii, 296
Nubar Pasha, i, 260 *note*, 296, 450; appointed Prime Minister, ii, 28, 29
"Nuncupative," meaning of, i, 521 *note*

O'Brien, Sir Patrick, i, 194
O'Brien, William, editor of *United Ireland*, ii, 152 *note*
O'Connor, John, ii, 152 *note*
O'Connor, T. P., ii, 550
Odger, George, i, 78, 94; death and funeral, 232
O'Donnell, F. H., i, 354
O'Gorman, Major, anecdotes of, i, 193; ii, 531
O'Hagan, Thomas, 1st Baron, secret mission to Rome, i, 375
O'Kelly, James, ii, 49
Old Age Pensions, ii, 352
Oldham, meeting at, ii, 68
Oliphant, Margaret, i, 199
Oliver, Peter, miniatures, ii, 236
Ollivier, Démosthène, i, 483
Ollivier, Émile, friendship with Sir C. Dilke, i, 153, 484; ii, 335; first meeting with him, i, 269; on origin of the war of 1870, 269, 485; letter to Sir C. Dilke, 467 *note*; at St. Tropez, 483; father, 483; house, 484; on the neutrality of the Suez Canal, 544; at La Moutte, ii, 333, 523
Ollivier, Mdme. Émile, ii, 335
Oparo, or the Enchanting Isle, i, 66
Oran, i, 183
Origin of the War of 1870, i, 485 *note*
Orléans, Charles d', ii, 545
Orta, ii, 521
Osborn, G. W., ii, 242, 272
Osborn, Thos. G., i, 28, 43
Osborne, Council at, i, 499
Osborne judgment, trade-union case, ii, 346
O'Shea, Capt., i, 437; ii, 157
O'Shea, K., i, 437; relations with Parnell, 366, 445; divorce case, ii, 268
Osman Digna, in command of Dervishes, ii, 28; withdrawal of reward for his death, 43
Otway, A. J., i, 122
Owen, Rt. Hon. Sir Hugh, member of the Commission on reform of Local Government, ii, 11; on the Poor Law, 12; lines on, 15
Oxford, ii, 562; Commission, i, 200
Pacifico, Don, case of, i, 469
Paget, Sir A., at Rome, i, 473
Paisley, ii, 14
Palgrave, Sir Reginald, ii, 311
Pall Mall Gazette, extract from, i, 386 *note*
Pallain, Georges, ii, 338; secretary to Gambetta, i, 226; Regent of the Bank of France, ii, 487
Palmer, Ralph Charlton, i, 524
Palmer, Sir Roundell. *See* Selborne
Palmerston, Henry J., 3rd Viscount, at Exhibition of 1862, i, 23; foreign policy, 51; ii, 493, 533; views on the case of Haynau, i, 469 *note*
Pamir Treaty of 1895, ii, 488
Panama Canal, i, 408, 409; financial scandals, ii, 476
Panariétoff, Prof., secret agent of the Prince of Bulgaria, i, 331
Panlucci de' Calboli, Marchese Fabrizio, ii, 234
Papers of a Critic, i, 184
Paradin, Guillaume, *Histoire de notre Temps*, ii, 546
Parcel post, introduction of the, ii, 89
Paris, i, 14, 19, 79, 103, 124-132, 153, 181, 225, 260, 268, 270, 285, 296, 299, 339, 372, 386, 393, 403, 406, 451, 513, 523, 545; ii, 501 *note*, 522, 528; review at, i, 15, 103; combined tattoo, 15; siege of, 109-112; raised, 124; the second siege, 124-132; causes of the insurrection, 128; bombardment, 129; destruction of the Hôtel de Ville, 130; fire at the Charity Bazaar, ii, 336; Exhibition of 1889, 476; of 1900, 501 *note*; Hôtel St. James, 339; Treaty of, i, 115; attempts to revise, 119
Paris, Comte de, i, 199, 265
Parker, Sir Gilbert, ii, 383
Parkes, Sir Henry, congratulations to Sir C. Dilke, ii, 280
Parkhurst, Sir R., ii, 91
Parks Bill, i, 166 *note*
Parliament, dissolution in 1874, i, 171; in 1880, 301; prorogued in 1882, 475; prorogued in 1884, ii, 66
Parliament Street, scheme for widening, i, 541
Parliaments, triennial, i, 76
Parnell, C. S., i, 234; abstains from voting, 224; alliance with Fourth Party, 244 *note*; use of obstruction, 256; examination of the Speaker, 256; meetings with Sir C. Dilke, 281, 441; political views, 282; prose-

cution of, 345; watched by Home Office, 366; relations with Mrs. O'Shea, 366, 445; arrest, 373; imprisoned, 436; in London, 437; return to Parliament, 438; promise to cease outrages, 439; negotiations with Gladstone, 444; interviews with Manning, ii, 130, 132; on the Coercion Bill, 142; views on Gladstone, 152 *note*; on the Home Rule question, 155; on National independence, 182; instructions to vote for Conservative, 193; untruthfulness, 215; divorce case, 268
Patrick, R. W. Cochran, i, 42
Pattison, Mr. and Mrs. Frank, ii, 91
Pattison, Mark, Rector of Lincoln College, marries Emilia F. Strong, i, 187; dines with Sir C. Dilke, 487; death, ii, 91
Pattison, Mrs. Mark. *See* Dilke, Emilia Francis, Lady
Pauncefote, Sir Julian (afterwards Baron), Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, i, 384; ii, 100 *note*, 261; tribute to Sir C. Dilke, i, 496; at the conference on Egypt, 543; fencing, ii, 233; Ambassador at Washington, 504
Paxton, Sir Joseph, i, 17
Payment of members of Parliament, ii, 471
Payne, F. Taylor, ii, 563
Pearson, Prof. Charles H., i, 280
Peel, Arthur (afterwards Viscount), accepts Speakership, ii, 10; farewell to the House, 566
Peel, Sir Robert, at the meeting of the Greek Committee, i, 278
Pembroke Lodge, i, 288
Pène, Henri de, i, 153
Penjdeh, i, 532; Russian advance on, ii, 115; conflict at, 117, 120
Pepperell, Rev. W., i, 308 *note*
Percival, Dr. John (Bishop of Hereford), belief in Sir C. Dilke, ii, 179; at Rugby, 271; on Tariff Reform, 459
Percy, Henry A. G., Earl, on the Congo atrocities, ii, 381
Persia, declines cession of Herat, i, 320; settlement of the boundary question with Russia, 429, 532
Persia, Nasiru'ddin, Shah of, story of, i, 487
Peshawur, ii, 296
Phalsbourg, bombardment of, i, 105
Phillimore, Sir Walter, counsel at the trial of Sir C. Dilke, ii, 175
Phœnix Park murders, i, 440, 444
Picquart, Colonel, ii, 297, 337
Playfair, Sir Lyon (afterwards Lord), suspension of Irish members, i, 447 *note*
Plimsoll, Samuel, story of, i, 193
Plon-Plon (Prince Napoléon Jérôme), i, 113
Plunket, David (afterwards Lord Rathmore), i, 255
Poland, administration of, ii, 141
Police force, control of the, i, 515; ii, 10
Political Economy Club, i, 88; ii, 554
Polling Bill, Hours of, i, 135, 178, 240 *note*, 257, 259; ii, 5
Pollock, Sir Frederick, 2nd Bart., i, 199
Pollock, Sir Frederick, 3rd Bart., i, 199
Pollock, Juliet, Lady, i, 199
Pollock, Walter Herries, editor of the *Saturday Review*, i, 200
Pondoland, annexation of, ii, 94
Ponsonby, Sir Henry, secretary to Queen Victoria, i, 495; at Windsor, 511; invaluable services, ii, 19; interview with Sir C. Dilke, 54; proposals on Redistribution Bill, 64, 67; on reform of the House of Lords, 68
Pont-à-Mousson, i, 107
Poor, Housing of the. *See* Housing
Poor Law, administration of, ii, 12; Conference, meeting, 195
Popovici, Dr. Aurel, *Die Vereinigten Staaten von Gross-Oesterreich*, ii, 510 *note*
Porché, François, ii, 545
Port Hamilton, abandoned, ii, 123; criticism on, 402 *note*
Portsmouth, U.S., Treaty of, ii, 506
Portsmouth dockyard, i, 234
Portugal, proposed treaty with England, i, 534; native labour system, ii, 376
Pouyer-Quertier, A. T., story of, i, 405
Power, Richard, i, 267
Present Position of European Politics, i, 413, 534; ii, 161, 245, 250, 259 *note*, 260, 263 *note*, 388, 389, 452, 476 *note*, 477 *note*, 504 *note*
Preservation of Commons Society, i, 101, 259
Pressensé, M., ii, 540
Prevention of Crimes Bill, i, 446
Prince Florestan, i, 168; ii, 537; publication of, i, 175, 177; extract from, 176; authorship disclosed, 177

Privy Council, character of the oath, i, 499; "Lords" of, ii, 562
Problems of Greater Britain, ii, 270, 274, 400, 408, 452, 537
Probyn, John, ii, 327
Procedure, question, i, 423; new Rules, 488; reform, 546
Procter, Anne B., i, 160; ii, 548
Protection of Property, measure, i, 365
Provence, ii, 522, 525, 529; language, 562
Prussia, William I., King of. *See* William I., German Emperor
Public Health system, measures, ii, 24
Punch, verses on Sir C. Dilke, ii, 15
Punting, art of, i, 482
Putumayo revelations, ii, 379
Pyrford, ii, 91, 199, 229, 244, 324-326, 547; Cattery at, 240

Quarterly Review, articles in the, ii, 85 *note*, 501 *note*, 559 *note*
Quetta, ii, 295, 401; railway, order for the completion, 87, 89; British troops at, 115
Quinet, Edgar, funeral, i, 187

Rabelais, F., ii, 566
Rachel, Mdme., acting, i, 14, 15
Radical Club, founded in 1870, i, 100; ii, 468; meetings, i, 159
Radicalism, treatise on, i, 56, 59; ii, 537; summary of objects, ii, 469
Radical party, policy, i, 164; divided in 1877, 223
Radical Programme, pamphlet by Chamberlain and Morley, i, 168
Radical Programme, 1890, by Sir C. Dilke, ii, 277
Ralli, M., ii, 293 *note*
Ramsay, John W., Baron (afterwards 13th Earl of Dalhousie), views on Home Rule, i, 300
Rancez y Villa Nueva, Marquis de Casa Laigleisia, Spanish diplomatist, i, 157, 285
Rantzau, Count and Countess von, ii, 303
Ras Makonnen, at Dockett, ii, 318
Rathbone, William, i, 275
Rathmore, David, 1st Lord, i, 255
Reay, Donald James, 11th Baron, i, 275, 305; at York House, 285
Record Office, papers in, ii, 558
Redesdale, B. F., Lord. *See* Mitford
Redistribution of seats, i, 138, 164, 192, 233; ii, 2; Bill, ii, 64-79, 101, 145; Committee meetings on, 65, 71, 73; conferences between the leaders, 74, 78; terms of agreement, 78; passed, 124
Redmond, John, interview with Sir C. Dilke, ii, 459; moderation, 466
Red Sea Coast, measures for defence, ii, 35; expedition sent, 37
Reeve, Henry, editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, i, 199, 305
Reeves, W. P., at the Guildhall, ii, 361
Reform Bill of 1866, i, 52; result, 81
Reform Club, banquet at, ii, 165
Registration Bill, i, 135, 240 *note*, 258, 259
Registration in Parliamentary boroughs, Committee of Enquiry on, i, 85
Reid, Sir Robert (now Earl Loreburn), ii, 344, 365, 466 *note*
Reid, Sir William, i, 7
Reinach, Joseph, i, 454 *note;* ii, 264, 298, 340, 528, 540; secretary to Gambetta, i, 226; fencing, ii, 234; friendship with Sir C. Dilke, 300, 337
Reinach, Salomon, ii, 338; on Sir C. Dilke's knowledge of French literature, 546
Renaissance of Art in France, ii, 227
Renan, Ernest, i, 305; ii, 227, 334; *Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse*, ii, 545
Renan, Cornélie, ii, 334
Representation of the People Bill, i, 52 *note;* ii, 5; pamphlet on, i, 281
Reuss, Prince Henry of, i, 119
Reventlow, Ernst, Graf zu, extract from, ii, 496 *note*, 498 *note*, 514 *note*, 515 *note*
Reynolds, John Hamilton, i, 5
Rhodes, Cecil, letters to Sir C. Dilke, ii, 301, 302; subscription to Home Rule, 302 *note;* at Dockett, 318
Riaz Pasha, i, 450
Ribot, M., at Cannes, i, 514; on relations with Austria, ii, 510 *note*
Ricardian theory, i, 88 *note*
Richard, Henry, i, 83
Ridgeway, Sir J. West, chief of Afghan Boundary Commission, ii, 121
Ridler, Charles, ii, 328 *note*
Ripon, George, 1st Marquis of, i, 266; support of Lord Hartington, 223; Viceroy of India, 317; policy in Afghanistan, 321; appoints Col. Gordon private secretary, 326; proposal to surrender Merv, 386; correspondence with Sir C. Dilke, 418; criticism on Lord Hartington's policy, 430; views on the Kilmain-

ham Treaty, 445; refuses delimitation of the Afghan frontiers, 532 *note*; character of his rule in India, ii, 370; member of the Cabinet, 467 *note*; memorial service, 552
Ripon, Constance G., 2nd Marchioness of. *See* Grey, Lady de
"Risk of European Coalition," ii, 496 *note*
Ristori, A., the tragedian, i, 161
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. T. (afterwards Baron), President of the Local Government Board, ii, 271; Local Government Bill, 271
Roberts, Frederick, Earl, ii, 44; at Kabul, i, 298; correspondence with Sir C. Dilke, ii, 88, 388; memorandum "Is an Invasion of India by Russia Possible?" 88; views on defence of the North-West Frontier in India, 122; "What are Russia's vulnerable points?" 122; views against a campaign in the Black Sea, 156; at Karachi, 294; reform of the native force, 395; advance on Kimberley, 430; appointed Commander-in-Chief, 436
Robinson, W. B., i, 235
Rochefort, Comte V. H., escape from New Caledonia, i, 190
Rodin, Auguste, ii, 334
Roebuck, Rt. Hon. J. A., support of Lord Hartington, i, 224; dislike of Gladstone, 228
Romanos, Athos, at Dockett, ii, 318
Rome, ii, 296; style of conversation in, i, 283
Romer, Sir Robert, at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, i, 26
Rose, Dr. J. Holland, *The Development of the European Nations*, ii, 31 *note*; *Origins of the War*, 479 *note*; *Life of Napoleon*, 553 *note*
Rose, Sir J., at Strawberry Hill, i, 240
Rosebery, Archibald, 5th Earl of, i, 233, 253; ii, 467; President of Greek Committee, i, 278; caution, 279; Under-Sec. at the Home Office, 371; proposed Secretary of State for Scotland, 521; Lord Privy Seal, ii, 100 *note*; member of Cabinet, 100 *note*, 109, 111 *note*; congratulations on Sir C. Dilke's engagement, 182; criticism on, 183; appointed Foreign Secretary, 206; leader of the Liberal party, 290; foreign policy, 483, 486, 513
Rossetti, G. C. D., on voting, i, 161
Rosslyn, R. Francis, 4th Earl of, style of his conversation, i, 283
Rosyth, naval base, ii, 448
Rothschild, Alfred de, i, 411, 435; ii, 99; at Marlborough House, i, 520
Rothschild, Alphonse de, i, 435
Rothschild, Sir Anthony de, i, 285
Rothschild, Baron Ferdinand de, i, 253; at Sloane Street, ii, 241
Rothschild, Sir Nathaniel de (afterwards Lord), i, 285; ii, 70; support of Lord Hartington, i, 224
Rottenburg, Baron von, ii, 303, 308
Roty, L. O., medallion of Sir C. Dilke, ii, 501 *note*
Rouher, Eugène, i, 354; famous speech, 103
Roumania, relations with Austria-Hungary, ii, 251
Round Table Conferences, ii, 266, 267; failure, 268
Roustan, M., i, 381
Rouvier, M., Minister of Commerce, i, 285, 398
Rowlatt, J. F., at Dockett, ii, 318
Rowlinson, G. H., on characteristics of Sir C. Dilke, ii, 327, 330
Rowton, Montagu, 1st Baron, private secretary to Lord Beaconsfield, i, 253; at Marlborough House, 520; interview with Sir C. Dilke, ii, 74
Royal Academy, attack on, i, 198
Royal Grants question, views on. *See* Civil List
Royal Titles Bill, i, 196
Royat, ii, 244, 272
Rubinstein, A. G., playing, i, 232
Rugby, meeting at, ii, 203
Ruskin, John, i, 267; "The Future of England," ii, 189 *note*
Russell, Lady Agatha, i, 288
Russell, Lady Arthur, i, 285
Russell, Lord Arthur, i, 285, 305, 487
Russell, Sir Charles (afterwards Lord Russell of Killowen), defence of Sir C. Dilke, ii, 173
Russell, Frances, Countess, i, 285
Russell, Rt. Hon. G. W. E., ii, 171, 189; appointed Under-Secretary to Local Government Board, i, 508
Russell, John, 1st Earl, death, i, 285
Russell, Lord Odo. *See* Ampthill
Russell, Hon. Rollo, i, 288
Russell, Scott, Secretary of Society of Arts, i, 7
Russell, Sir W. H., i, 132; candidate for Chelsea, 78; at Nancy, 107
Russia, impressions of, i, 92; future of, 204; ultimatum to Turkey, 207; declares war against Turkey, 208,

219; repudiates Black Sea article in Treaty of Paris, 212; ii, 512; methods of administration, i, 213; result of war with Turkey, 236; rumour of occupation of Constantinople, 242; secret agreement with England, 254; mission to Kabul, 261; result of policy of aggression, 298, 299; threatened advance on Merv, 321; rumour of hostilities with China, 356; proposed conference on the right of asylum, 386; advance on Afghanistan, 531; ii, 115; policy in Persia, i, 532; advance on the frontier, ii, 87-89; attack on Penjdeh, 117, 120; accepts arbitration, 121; foreign policy, 246, 259, 260, 502; possible results of possession of Constantinople, 253; position with respect to Afghanistan, 401; treaty of alliance with France, 476; relations with Germany, 491; character of military administration, 503; agreement with Japan, 506
Russo-Persian frontier, delimitation, i, 429
Rutland, John, 7th Duke of. *See* Manners
Rylands, Peter, i, 83; pun, 234; on annexation of Transvaal, 366

Sackén, Nicolas Dmitrivitch von der Osten, i, 91
Sadowa, i, 102
Sala, G. A., i, 289
Saigo, Marshal, i, 195
St. Aldwyn, Earl. *See* Beach
St. Briavels, castle of, ii, 330
Sainte Campagne, La, ii, 90, 229, 524 *note*
Ste. Claire, funeral at, i, 483
Saint-Hilaire, Barthélemy, i, 338, 340; extradition treaty with Russia, 387
St. James's Hall, meeting at, i, 164, 222
St. Lucia, naval base, ii, 442
St. Maxime, ii, 524
St. Petersburg, Sir C. Wentworth Dilke dies at, i, 87; Sir C. Dilke at, 87, 91
St. Tropez, i, 483
Saldanha, Duc de, i, 227
Salisbury, Robert, 3rd Marquis of, at Conference at Constantinople, i, 207; policy on Eastern Question, 216, 250; appointed Secretary of Foreign Affairs, 248; lines on, 262; at the Berlin Congress, 263; denial of offer of Tunis to France, 335, 382; views on European Concert, 342; opinion of Irish Land Bill, 371; views against Arrears Bill, 448; policy in Egypt, 455; member of Housing Commission, ii, 16; question of precedence, 16; suggested remedies, 18; nominates Sir C. Dilke as member of Grillion's Club, 25; views on Redistribution, 66; criticism on J. Chamberlain, 69; conferences on Redistribution, 74, 78, 124; correspondence with Sir C. Dilke, 75; with Lord Spencer, 78; views on Housing question, 104, 126; against coercion, 133; forms a "stop-gap Government," 154; friendly feelings for Sir C. Dilke, 163; Prime Minister, 310, 423; on the British Constitution, 430; foreign policy, 475, 500, 511; on cession of Heligoland, 478; policy in Siam, 486
Samoa, island of, German warships at, ii, 96; conference on, 98
Samuel, Rt. Hon. Herbert, on the Congo atrocities, ii, 381
Samuelson, Sir Bernhard, i, 333
San Stefano, Treaty of, i, 248, 252
Sandars, J. S., private secretary to Mr. Balfour, ii, 526
Sandeman, Sir Robert, i, 386; at Quetta, ii, 115; interview with Sir C. Dilke, 223; Agent-General for British Baluchistan, 295
Sand, George, i, 163
Sandringham, i, 427, 487, 492; ii, 74
Sandwich Islands, i, 415. *See* Cannibal
Sanger, C. P., *England's Guarantee to Belgium and Luxemburg*, ii, 259 *note*
Sarrazin, M., ii, 540
Sartorius, Colonel, views on expedition to Khartoum, ii, 54
Sassenaye, Marquise de, ii, 336
Saussier, General, ii, 297
Saxe-Weimar, Prince Edward of, at Marlborough House, i, 520
Saxony, Frederic Augustus II., King of, gift to Sir Wentworth Dilke, i, 10
Say, Léon, Ambassador to London, i, 300, 323, 349; ii, 338; interview with Sir C. Dilke, i, 350; resigns Ambassadorship, 351; President of the Senate, 351
Scharf, Sir George, Keeper of the National Portrait Gallery, ii, 544
Schmitt, Bernadotte, *England and Germany*, extract from, ii, 515 *note*
Schnadhorst, Francis, ii, 105, 194, 275

Schouvalof, Count Peter, i, 163; characteristics, 118; Director of the Secret Police, 118; description of Berlin Congress, 263
Schreiner, W. P., ii, 375; at Dockett, 317
Schuyler, Eugene, American Consul at Constantinople, i, 206; account of the massacres at Batak, 207
Sclater-Booth, George (afterwards Lord Basing), patronage at Local Government Board, i, 504
Scotland, proposed creation of a Secretaryship of State, i, 521; Housing Commission in, ii, 116
"Scrutator," "Who is responsible for the War?" i, 157
Sculling, on "sliding-seats," ii, 316
"Sea, Command of the," ii, 409
Seats Bill, ii, 111, 117, 124
"Secret History of the First Home Rule Bill," ii, 224 *note*
Secret Service money, expenditure, i, 357, 365
Seeley, Sir J. R., ii, 537
Seely, Rt. Hon. J. E. B., at the Colonial Office, ii, 374; on Sir C. Dilke's defence of the weak, 377-379
Selborne, Roundell, 1st Earl of, political views, i, 86; Lord Chancellor, 306; "slowness," 439; character of his draft answers, 549; opinions on law, 554; opposition to the City Guilds Bill, ii, 11; threat to resign, 45; views on an expedition to the Soudan, 45, 48
Selborne, William, 2nd Earl of, on reform of the army, ii, 414; appointed First Lord of Admiralty, 436
Selwyn, J. R., Bishop of Melanesia, i, 50 *note*
Sendall, Sir Walter, case of, i, 504
Sergeant, Lewis, secretary of the Greek Committee, i, 241
Serrano, Marshal, Regent of Spain, i, 189 *note*
Servia, war with Turkey, i, 207; armistice granted, 207; assassination of King and Queen, ii, 511
Sesto, Duchesse de (formerly Duchesse de Morny), i, 190; ii, 562
Severn, the, ii, 328, 329
Severn, Joseph, portraits of Keats, ii, 238, 543
Sexton, T., ii, 212; imprisoned, i, 436
Seymour, Admiral Sir Beauchamp (afterwards Lord Alcester), instructions to bombard Alexandria, i, 465
Seymour, Horace, secretary to Mr. Gladstone, i, 505
Shackleton, D. J., on the Trade Disputes Bill, ii, 345 *note*; Bill to legalize picketing, 366
Shaw, W., i, 293, 438
Shee, George, i, 36; result of his examination, 43, 45
Sheffield, George, i, 289; opinion of Paul Grousset, 190; secretary to Lord Lyons, 455
Sheil, Katherine, parents, i, 146; marriage, 147. *See* Dilke, Katherine, Lady
Shelley, P. B., poems, ii, 568
Sherbrooke, Robert, Lord. *See* Lowe
Shere Ali, Amir of Afghanistan, refuses to receive British mission, i, 261
Shere Ali, Wali of Kandahar, cousin of Amir, i, 336
Sheridan, General P. H., i, 107
Sheridan, P. J., case of, i, 520
Shimadzu Suboro, i, 195
Shop Assistants Bill, ii, 352
Siam, blockade, ii, 453; advance of the French, 483, 486
Siberia, i, 92
Sidgwick, Henry, member of Radical Club, i, 100 *note*; at Cambridge Union debates, ii, 563
Sidgwick, W. C., member of the Radical Club, i, 100 *note*
Sinadino, Greek banker, i, 466, 471
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John, Secretary for Scotland, ii, 467 *note*
Singleton, Mary M. (afterwards Lady Currie), i, 200
Sinkat, siege of, ii, 28; fall, 28
Sizeranne, Robert de la, ii, 524
Skinner, Hilary, at Nancy, i, 107
Slade, Sir Alfred, i, 143
Slavery, views against, ii, 371. *See also* Native races
Sloane, Sir Hans, ii, 315
Sloane Street, No. 76, treasures at, ii, 229-240
Smallpox, floating hospitals for, ii, 23
Smith, Sir Clarence, ii, 276
Smith, Constance Hinton, ii, 520, 530, 535
Smith, Goldwin, Life of, ii, 558
Smith, Henry, i, 200, 305
Smith, Horace and James, *Rejected Addresses*, i, 264; ii, 567
Smith, Sir Sidney, nickname, ii, 336
Smith, T. A. H., ii, 328 *note*
Smith, Miss Tizy, i, 160, 264
Smith, Dr. William, editor of *Quarterly Review*, i, 199

Smyrna, proposed naval occupation of, i, 331, 339
Smyth, P. J., i, 224
Sneyd, Lewis, ii, 563
Snook, John, i, 348
Solvyns, Baron, Belgian Minister, i, 227; definition of diplomacy, 435
Soudan, troubles in the, i, 551; evacuation, ii, 28-35, 38, 117; expedition, 47, 60; policy in, 110
Southwark election, i, 301
Spain, negotiations to join the Triple Alliance, i, 529; for commercial treaty with England, ii, 14
Speaker, the, articles in, ii, 381
Spencer, Herbert, at York House, i, 285
Spencer, John, 5th Earl, President of the Council, i, 306; appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 438, 442; administration, 516; ii, 139; hostility to J. Morley, i, 516; correspondence with Lord Salisbury, ii, 78; on Local Government Ireland scheme, 130; Land Purchase Bill, 133 *note*; unpopularity, 138; criticism on his policy, 181
Spezia, ii, 297
Spiders, or "Hampton Courters," ii, 326
Spuller, Eugène, i, 285; characteristics, 286, 407
Staal, M. de, proposal for plan of arbitration, ii, 117; meeting with Lord Granville, 118
Staël, Mdme. de, *Germany*, ii, 544
Stafford, Marquis of (afterwards 4th Duke of Sutherland), support of Lord Hartington, i, 224
Stalbridge, Richard, 1st Baron. *See* Grosvenor, Lord R.
Stambulof, M., ii, 246, 477
Stanhope, Edward, i, 385
Stanley, Lyulph, i, 509; member of Housing Commission, ii, 16 *note*, 17
Stanley, Maude, i, 509; member of Metropolitan Asylums Board, ii, 17
Stansfeld, Rt. Hon. J., refuses to take office, i, 309; use of patronage at the Local Government Board, 504
Steavenson, Judge D. F., ii, 276; friendship with Sir C. Dilke, i, 26; at Henley, ii, 165; belief in Sir C. Dilke, 179, 520; at Dockett, 318
Stephen, Sir Alexander Condie, ii, 121, mission to Khorassan, i, 533
Stephen, Sir James, i, 284
Stephen, Sir James Fitzjames, i, 284; report on administration of the army, ii, 398, 415, 425
Stephen, Sir Leslie, Fellow of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, i, 24; development of cult of athletics, 25; member of Radical Club, 100 *note*; appearance, 284
Stephenson, General Sir F., views on fall of Khartoum, i, 556
Stephenson, Robert, i, 17
Stevenson, Robert Louis, *Prince Otto*, ii, 540
Stewart, Sir Donald, views on defence of the North-West Frontier in India, ii, 122
Stewart, Mrs. Duncan, i, 199
Stewart, Colonel, J. D. H., C.M.G., i, 552, 555; ii, 33, 36, 39
Stockport, meeting at, ii, 68
Stoilof, Dr., ii, 246
Stokes, Mr., arrested and shot, ii, 380
Storey, Samuel, ii, 290
Stowe collection, proposed purchase of the, i, 527
Strachie, Constance, Lady, i, 162
Strawberry Hill, i, 162, 199
Strike, International, views against, ii, 281
Strong, Emilia Francis. *See* Dilke, Emilia Francis, Lady
"Strong at all Points," paper on, ii, 447
Strudwick, J. M., "Passing Days," i, 231
Suakim, British troops withdrawn from, ii, 46; despatched to, 97, 109; railway, 53, 55, 110, 114
Suez Canal, free navigation, i, 464, 544; conference, 549; widening of, 553; right of passage, ii, 252
Suffrage, manhood, ii, 147; adult, 147
"Suffrage of all Grown Men and Women," ii, 469 *note*
Sullivan, A. M., i, 300
Sulz, i, 104
Summerfields, i, 483
Sutherland, Cromartie, 4th Duke of. *See* Stafford
Swans, at Dockett, ii, 325
Swansea, i, 516
Sweated Industries Bill, ii, 358; Exhibition, 361
Sweating, evils of, ii, 359; Bill, 552
Sweden, Crown Prince of, in London, i, 292
Sweden, Oscar I., King of, gift to Sir Wentworth Dilke, i, 10
Sweden, Oscar II., King of, in London, i, 415
Swinburne, A. C., i, 230
Sydenham, George, 1st Baron, member of Committee on War Office reorganization, ii, 441

Sydney, John Robert, Earl, on question of precedence, ii, 16
Syria, result of intervention, ii, 93

Taafe, Count, ii, 248
Taff Vale judgment, ii, 344, 365
Taganrog, i, 91
Taglioni, Maria, the dancer (afterwards Comtesse Gilbert de Voisins), i, 161
Taine, Henri, on the characteristics of Emilia, Lady Dilke, ii, 227
Talbot, Captain, ii, 116
Talbot, Dr. E. S., Bishop of Southwark (now of Winchester), ii, 464
Talbot, Sir Reginald, ii, 297
Tamanieb, defeat of the Arabs at, ii, 46
Tamatave, incident, i, 540
Taplow, ii, 166
Tariff Reform, ii, 458
Tavistock, George, Marquis of (afterwards 10th Duke of Bedford), support of Lord Hartington, i, 224
Tawney, R. H., *Minimum Rates in the Chain-making Trade*, ii, 362 *note*
Taxation, system of, i, 76; of working classes, ii, 113
Taylor, B. H., ii, 328 *note*
Taylor, Peter, i, 83; member of the Radical Club, 100 *note*; opposition to Princess Louise's dowry, 138
Tcherkasky, Prince, Mayor of Moscow, i, 116
Tcherkasky, Princess, i, 118
Teck, Duke and Duchess of, i, 266
Tel-el-Kebir, battle of, i, 475; ii, 252
Temps, Le, extract from, ii, 318 *note*
Tenant Rights Bill, i, 518
Tennant, Mrs. H. J., ii, 317
Tennant, Rt. Hon. H. J., ii, 317, 356
Tennyson, Alfred, 1st Baron, story of, i, 230
Tenterden, Charles, 3rd Baron, Permanent Under-Secretary of State, i, 266, 314
Territorial force, ii, 444, 446, 449
Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill, ii, 445
Tewfik, Khedive of Egypt, i, 450; ii, 49
Thackeray, W. M., i, 13, 17; *Vanity Fair*, ii, 541
Thames, protection of, ii, 90
Therapia, ii, 293
Thiers, L. A., opinion of *Greater Britain*, i, 69; bombardment of Paris, 129; secret articles of peace, 188
Thomas, Clément, i, 128 *note*
Thomas, Herbert Preston, ii, 23, 24; *Work and Play of a Government Inspector*, extracts from, i, 505; ii, 25
Thomas, Howel, Secretary to Boundary (Seats) Commission, ii, 125, 276
Thomasson, J. P. T.., ii, 548
Thompson, Sir F., at conference on Egypt, i, 543
Thoms, W. J., founder of *Notes and Queries*, i, 5 *note*; sells *Notes and Queries* to Sir C. Dilke, 163
Thomson, Gaston, ii, 506 *note*
Thomson, Joseph, reports on British East Africa, ii, 84 *note*
Thorold, Algar, *Life of Mr. Labouchere*, ii, 224 *note*
Three Emperors' League, revival, i, 379
Thring, Sir Henry (afterwards Lord), i, 357; views on Local Government scheme, 527; member of Local Government Commission, ii, 11; views on the Poor Law, 12
Thunderer, i, 235; despatched to Tunis, 380 *note*
Thurn, Sir Everard im, at the Royal Geographical Society, ii, 83 *note*
Thursfield, J. R., ii, 244; belief in Sir C. Dilke, 179
Tigrane Pasha, ii, 297, 318
Tilbury forts, i, 21
Tilsit, Secret Articles, ii, 553
Times, extract from, i, 526 *note*, 541
Tirard, M., Minister of Commerce, i, 340, 350, 395
Tirpitz, Admiral A. P. von, ii, 437
Tissot, M., Ambassador at Constantinople, i, 299; to London, 456; views on deposing the Khedive, 457; opinion of M. Freycinet, 461
Tisza, Koloman, ii, 248
Tittoni, Signor, ii, 515 *note*
Tokar, siege of, ii, 28; fall, 28
Tokio, i, 195
Tolstoi, Count Dmitry A., despotism, i, 117; unpopularity, 117
Tonquin, i, 541
"Torpeur Républicaine," ii, 502 *note*
Torrens, McCullagh, member of Radical Club, i, 100 *note*; of Housing Commission, ii, 16 *note*
Toulon, i, 79, 261, 296, 303, 511, 514; ii, 4, 15, 275, 326, 523; villa of "La Sainte Campagne" at, ii, 90, 229, 230
Tourgenief, i, 91; ii, 542
Tours, i, 112
Townsend, Meredith, i, 266
Trade Boards Bill, ii, 358, 361, 560

Trade Disputes Bill, ii, 345 *note*, 358, 472
Trade-Union Congress, ii, 520; Parliamentary Committee's meetings with Sir C. Dilke, ii, 356 *note*
Trade-unionism, views on, ii, 343
Trans-Mekong Keng-Cheng, ii, 486
Transvaal, annexation of, i, 271; criticisms on, 366, 369; reversal, 369; debate on, 530
Trap-Bat Club, i, 17
Treaties, most-favoured-nation clause in, i, 401
Treaties, secret, number of, i, 205 *note*
Tresca, Alfred, i, 110; supposed clerical views, 355
Trevelyan, Rt. Hon. Sir George, on Reform Bill of 1867, i, 81; Junior Lord of the Admiralty, 84; friendship with Sir C. Dilke, 84; on army reform, 137; walks with Sir C. Dilke, 145; Electoral Reform Bill, 164; support of Lord Hartington, 224; motion on the franchise and redistribution, 233, 258; ii, 66; congratulations to Sir C. Dilke, i, 496; hostility to Morley, 516; resigns Chief Secretaryship of Ireland, ii, 71; gift to Sir C. Dilke of bronze "Victory," 126 *note*; letter to him, 126 *note*; illness, 132; tribute to him, 159; on the scheme of National Councils, 203; resignation in 1886, 211
Trinity Hall, Cambridge, i, 24; ii, 558, 559; traditions, i, 197; toasts at dinner, 197 *note*
Tripartite Treaty, i, 212
Triple Alliance, i, 529; ii, 245, 248
Trouville, i, 20
Tucker, Right Rev. Alfred R., Bishop of Uganda, letter to Sir C. Dilke, ii, 371
Tuckwell, Rev. W., *A. W. Kinglake: a Biographical and Literary Study*, extract from, i, 147 *note*; translation of inscriptions at Dockett Eddy, ii, 90 *note*, 324; at Pyrford, 547; impressions of Sir C. Dilke, 547-568
Tuckwell, Rosa, at Pyrford, ii, 547
Tunis, designs of France on, i, 334, 379; occupation of, 394, 450; concessions in, ii, 485
Turkestan, massacres in, i, 213
Turkey, need for protection of Christians, i, 204; misrule in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 205; result of the European Consular Mission, 205; war with Servia and Montenegro, 207; ultimatum from Russia, 207; Conference at Constantinople, 207; Ambassadors withdrawn, 208; war declared by Russia, 208, 219; result of the war, 236; partition, 298; proposed coercion, 330; collective note of the Powers, 333; decision to surrender Dulcigno, 340; policy in Egypt, 457, 474; relations with Greece and Bulgaria, ii, 293; rule in Crete, 492; war with Greece, 492; "Young Turks" revolution, 511
Turkey, Abdul Hamid, Sultan of, despatches envoys to Egypt, i, 451; on its administration, 463; messages to Mr. Gladstone, ii, 269; receives Sir C. and Lady Dilke, 294
Turks, their appeal to Bismarck, i, 413
Twain, Mark, i, 160
Tweedmouth, Edward, 2nd Baron, First Lord of the Admiralty, ii, 467 *note*

Uganda, King Mtsa of, i, 415
Ultra-Radicals, group of, i, 83
Unemployed Bill, ii, 346
United Ireland, views of, ii, 152
"United Kingdom," article on, ii, 389
United Service Gazette, ii, 561
United States, relations with Great Britain, ii, 504
Universities Bill, i, 197, 200
Urquhart, David, lecture halls, i, 172
Uzanne, Octave, ii, 540

Vandervelde, M., ii, 357, 361; views on annexation of the Congo, 383
Vassiltchikof, brothers, i, 117, 118
Vaughan, Sir Charles, ii, 563
Vestris, Mdme., i, 13
Victoria, Anti-Sweating League formed, ii, 360
Victoria, Queen, at Exhibition of 1851 i, 10; gift to Mrs. Wentworth Dilke, 10; at Paris, 14; confers Baronetcy on Wentworth Dilke, 22; result of retirement, 139; income tax, 140; assumes title of Empress of India, 196, 261; interference in politics, 286; dislike of Sir C. Dilke's political views, 303; accepts his explanation, 308; opposition to evacuation of Kandahar, 337, 385; on dissensions in Cabinet, 346; on rising in the Transvaal, 369; decision on the statue of Lord Beaconsfield, 416; threats against her life, 416; on treatment of Marshal Haynau, 469 *note*; opposi-

tion to Convention with Turks, 475; views on the Chancellorship of Duchy of Lancaster, 492, 495; relations with Sir C. Dilke, 497; characteristics, 497, 500; at Osborne, 499; views on housing of the poor, 509; ii, 15, 20; at Windsor, i, 511; wish for an Indian bodyguard, 522; accident, 523; on Chamberlain's speech at Birmingham, 526; ii, 70; on Lord Dufferin's superseding Sir E. Malet, i, 548; opposition to Prince Leopold's appointment, ii, 26; suggests a meeting of the leaders of Parliament, 72; protest against withdrawal from Egypt, 97; agrees to retirement from Soudan, 118
Villiers, Rt. Hon. Charles P., i, 160, 199, 241, 284; at Aston Clinton, 302; military attaché in Paris, 523; report of a plot, 523
Vincent, Sir Edgar, appointed financier to the Egyptian Cabinet, i, 556
Vinoy, General, i, 126
Viviani, M., ii, 338
Vlangali, M., i, 117
Vladivostock, Russia's vulnerable spot, ii, 120, 123, 402
Voisins, Comtesse Gilbert de, i, 161
Volunteer force, renamed the Territorial, ii, 444
Voting in local elections, Bill to amend, ii, 285. *See also* Polling Bill

Waddington, Richard, ii, 332
Waddington, William, ii, 332, 486; proposes mediation between Turkey and Greece, i, 299; Ambassador to London, 300, 553; on the Tunis question, 382; on Egyptian finance, ii, 56
Waddy, S. D., Q.C., i, 288; member of the Liberal Central Association, i, 233
Wade, Sir Thomas, i, 266
Wady Halfa, i, 556; proposed despatch of a British force, ii, 42
Wages Boards Bill, ii, 361
Waldegrave, Frances, Countess, i, 162, 240; character as hostess, 199; death, 199, 291. *See also* Carlingford
Waldersee, Count, in command of the Allied forces against the Boxers, ii, 489
Wales, H.R.H. Albert Edward, Prince of. *See* Edward VII.
Wales, H.R.H. Alexandra, Princess of. *See* Alexandra, Queen
Walfisch Bay, ii, 81
Walker, Maria Dover, marriage, i, 6
Wallace Collection, ii, 564
Wallace, Sir Richard, ii, 564
Wallingford by-election, i, 53
Walmer Castle, i, 337
Walpole, Horace, sale of his collection, ii, 236
Walpole, Rt. Hon. Spencer H., criticism on, ii, 548
Walsh, Dr., President of Maynooth, ii, 131; Archbishop of Dublin, 140, 154; wish to be Papal Legate, 156
Wantage, Robert, Baron, report of his Committee on recruiting, ii, 415
War Office, conferences at the, i, 543; meeting, 555; reorganization, ii, 424; Committee appointed, 441
Warr, H. D., influence on Sir C. Dilke, i, 37; secretary to the Royal Commission upon City Companies, 37 *note*; remonstrance on Sir C. Dilke's studious habits, 49
Wason, J. Cathcart, *East Africa and Uganda*, ii, 84 *note*
Water question, return on the, i, 302
Waterford, Blanche, Marchioness of, ii, 564
Waterloo, battle of, ii, 559
Waterlow, Sir Sydney, i, 152
Watson, Sir Charles, *Life of Colonel Sir Charles Wilson*, ii, 29
Watts, G. F., portraits, ii, 235
Watts-Dunton, Theodore, i, 230
Wauchope, D. A., ii, 318, 319
Webb, Sidney, on Sir C. Dilke's services to Labour, ii, 351, 354; at the Guildhall, 361
Wedderburn, Sir David, member of Radical Club, i, 100 *note*
Wedderburn, Sir William, ii, 370
Weekly Dispatch, i, 183
Weil, Maurice, ii, 297, 298
Weiss, J. J., appointed Secretary in French Foreign Office, i, 407
Wellington, Duke of, at the Exhibition of 1851, i, 10; story of, 231; removal of his statue, 528
Wemyss, Francis Richard, 10th Earl of, i, 198 *note*; criticism of Sir C. Dilke, ii, 353
Wentworth, Sir Nicholas, ii, 231
Wentworth, Sir Peter, i, 3
Wentworth, Peter, i, 3; ii, 231
Wentworth, Sybil, i, 3
Wentworth, Thomas, 1st Baron, portrait of, ii, 231
Wentworth, Wentworth Dilke, i, 3
Westlake, Alice, ii, 91, 179
Westlake, John, ii, 224; belief in Sir

C. Dilke, 179; at Chelsea Liberal Association, 214
Westminster, Hugh, 1st Duke of, at the meeting of the Greek Committee, i, 278
Westminster Abbey, Malagasy envoys at, i, 540
Westminster Union Workhouse, case of, i, 506
Weyer, Mdme. van de, ii, 555
What does She do with it? pamphlet, i, 139
Whig party, character of policy, i, 180, 294; Lord Hartington's eulogy on, ii, 3
Whitbread, S., member of Liberal Central Association, i, 233
White, Sir George, on administration of Congo, ii, 384
White, Sir William A., i, 240; habit of roaring, 266; complains of Foreign Office, 417; Ambassador at Constantinople, ii, 246, 292
Whyte, A. F., ii, 517
Wilde, Jane F., Lady, ii, 565
Wilkinson, Spenser, ii, 294 *note*, 533; on characteristics of Sir C. Dilke, 320-322; essay *The Brain of an Army*, 405; collaborates with Sir C. Dilke on *Imperial Defence*, 406-411, 452; introduction, 406; joint letter on National Defence, 417-419, 451-457; at Oxford, 562
Willis's Rooms, meeting at, i, 278
William I., German Emperor, length of his telegram to Berlin, i, 157; interview with Benedetti, 486 *note*
William II., German Emperor, telegram to Kruger, ii, 489; at the funeral of King Edward VII., 515 *note*; treatment of his mother, 561
Wilson, A. J., ii, 491
Wilson, Col. Sir Charles, i, 545; ii, 29
Wilson, Sir C. Rivers, i, 325, 451, 460, 465, 466; Commissioner of the treaty of commerce between France and England, 393
Wilson, Havelock, ii, 286
Winchilsea, George J., 11th Earl of, saying of, i, 422
Windsor, Sir C. Dilke at, i, 511
Wine duties, proposed reduction, i, 350-352; increase, ii, 128, 143, 144
Winterbotham, H. S. P., Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, i, 104
Wisbech Workhouse, case of, ii, 23
Wiseman, Cardinal, Archbishop of Westminster, i, 11
Wissembourg, i, 104; victory of, 106
Wodehouse, Mrs., i, 190. *See* Anglesey
Wolf, Lucien, i, 255
Wolff, Sir Henry Drummond, i, 229, 241; political views, 267; dislike of Lord Derby, 267; proposed mission to Egypt, ii, 155
Wolmer, Viscount. *See* Selborne, 2nd Earl of
Wolseley, Viscount, administration of Cyprus, i, 276; at battle of Tel-el-Kebir, 475; at Eastwell, ii, 26; on Gen. Gordon's mission to the Soudan, 31; expedition to Khartoum, 44, 61; policy in Soudan, 110; proclamation, 114; on army reform, 391, 394; *Soldier's Pocket-Book*, 395; appointed Commander-in-Chief, 423; on military system of 1895, 436
Wolverhampton, Henry, Viscount. *See* Fowler
Wolverton, George, 2nd Baron. *See* Glyn
Woman's Suffrage, views on, ii, 6, 469; Bill of 1870, i, 99
Women Inspectors, appointed by Local Government Board, i, 508; ii, 353
Women's Trade-Union League, ii, 228, 348, 350
Wood, Sir Evelyn, in command of Egyptian army, i, 551; at Walmer, 554; on evacuation of Cairo, 555
Wood, Canon P. A. L., ii, 273, 279
Wood, Judge W. W., ii, 318, 319
Woodstock, Mayor of, i, 191
Wordsworth, William, criticism on his poetry, ii, 567
Work and Play of a Government Inspector, extracts from, i, 505; ii, 25
Working classes, taxation, ii, 113
Workmen's Compensation Act, ii, 352
Wörth, battle of, i, 105
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. G., Under-Secretary for War, ii, 433

Yates, Edmund, i, 289
Yorkshire, single-member district, ii, 66

Zanzibar, ii, 96, 99; result of policy of procrastination, i, 535; British protectorate over, ii, 83, 479; transferred to Germany, 100
Zebehr Pasha, protests against, i, 557; a dealer in slaves, ii, 28; proposed

Governor of the Soudan, 33, 39, 41; resentment against Gordon, 36, 39; views against proposed despatch to Khartoum, 42; arrested and interned, 111 *note*
Zinopoulos, M., i, 238 *note*
Zola, Émile, ii, 337
Zouche, Sir Edward, ii, 91
Zulu, the cat, ii, 240
Zululand, ii, 86, 96
Zulus, demand for abolition of their military system, i, 271; invasion of their territory, 271
Zurich, Congress at, ii, 521

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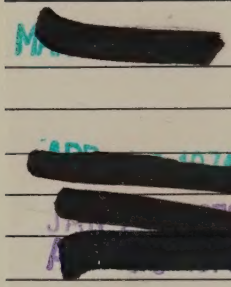

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